

# THE CHICAGO JEWISH FORUM

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## *Contents*

GERMANS AGAINST HITLER - - - - -	<i>Alfred Werner</i>	223
IN THE SERVICE OF THE TORAH - - - - -	<i>Mark M. Krug</i>	228
THE STATE OF THE YIDDISH THEATER - - - - -	<i>Morris Freedman</i>	234
JUDAEO-CHRISTIAN LEGENDS IN JAPAN - - - - -	<i>George F. Rohrlich</i>	239
ADMONITION— <i>A Woodcut</i> - - - - -	<i>Ilya Schor</i>	247
SELWYN S. SCHWARTZ: STYLE IS CONFLICT - - - - -	<i>Samuel K. Workman</i>	248
BARBED WIRE— <i>A Drawing</i> - - - - -	<i>David Segel</i>	251
THE FIVE DOLLAR BILL— <i>A Short Story</i> - - - - -	<i>Ralph Friedman</i>	252
JEWISH POETS IN AMERICA - - - - -	<i>Charles I. Glicksberg</i>	259
REPORT FROM JERUSALEM - - - - -	<i>Geoffrey B. Wigoder</i>	265
WASHINGTON NOTES - - - - -	<i>Murray Frank</i>	268
WEST COAST LETTER - - - - -	<i>Carey McWilliams</i>	273
BOOK REVIEWS - - - - -		277-290
INDEX - - - - -		291

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# Germans Against Hitler

By ALFRED WERNER

RECENTLY one of Goebbels' victims, the elderly poet, Ernst Wiechert, delivered a series of lectures at the University of California. Americans, hearing of him, may be excused if they ask whether there were other German writers who also dared to oppose Nazism. The answer, "There were a few," may lead to another question: "Why did Germany produce so few counterparts to Aragon, Eluard, Vercors and other poets of France who risked their lives fighting the ignoble Supermen with the pen—and often with arms?"

One cannot answer this satisfactorily by resorting to what has been termed "racialism in reverse"—the contention that the German intelligentsia is biologically incapable of anti-Fascist action. Nonetheless it is illuminating to compare the behavior of Romain Rolland to Gerhart Hauptmann's. The French Nobel Prize winner refused to appease the Vichyites. Throughout the war the sick old man lived in seclusion, subjected to the chicaneries of the pro-Fascist local *sous-prefet*, and, like all other Frenchmen (except collaborators) condemned to semi-starvation. His German colleague, however, although he could have gone on living unharmed as the grand seigneur of Agnetendorf, tried his damndest to get into the Nazis' good graces.

On the other hand, such non-Jewish writers as Bert Brecht, Leonhard Frank, Oskar Maria Graf, Annette Kolb, the Mann brothers, Erich Maria Remarque, Albrecht Schaeffer, Fritz von Unruh and Carl Zuckmayer went into exile rather than to submit to the supervision of Goebbels' *Reichsschrifttumskammer*. When

Heinrich Mann was ousted from the presidency of the Academy of Poets, that great poet, Stefan George—although, in a sense, a nationalist himself—refused this office, preferring voluntary exile in Switzerland, where he died in December, 1933. Ricarda Huch (known in the United States for her novel, *Eros Invincible* and her monumental Garibaldi biography, both published by Knopf) voluntarily left the Academy when the Hitlerites purged it of all "non-Aryans" and other "undesirables." Although she stayed in her native country, the Frau Doktor severed her connections with her Leipzig publisher in favor of a free Swiss publishing firm. Whereas many of her colleagues sold themselves for a mess of pottage and a seat in the *Dichter-akademie*, this brave old lady, in a historical work on the Holy Roman Empire, dared to ridicule the Nazis' heathen philosophy and racial arrogance.

A few others, too, chose to "fight" the Fascists—by resorting to historiography or publishing works with thinly disguised critical allusions to Nazism. In some instances the Gestapo saw through these tricks and punished the audacious authors. Frank Thiess who, at first, tried to get along with the Nazis, later barely escaped imprisonment for his "impudent" novel on the Byzantine Empire which was banned shortly after publication. It was Thiess who, after the war, coined the phrase "Inner Emigrants," referring to himself and others who had little in common with Hitlerism, had even attacked it, although they never left German soil.

If the term is applied in a loose sense, the Juenger brothers were "Inner Emi-

grants," too: Ernst because in *The Marble Cliffs* (recently published by New Directions) he attacked the Nazi regime in metaphoric language; and his brother, Friedrich Georg on account of his lengthy poem, *The Poppy*, which began innocently by praising the poppy and its juice, that hypnotic reliever of pain, only to lead up to a sharp condemnation of the Third Reich. Yet the Juengers were among those who, in the twenties, helped usher in National Socialism!

This is also true of Albrecht Haushofer, a son of the famous "geopolitician." But whereas the elder Haushofer, who listed Hitler and Hess among his disciples, served the Nazis until *Goetterdaemmerung* when he committed suicide, the son, also a professor of geopolitics, broke with the Nazis and joined the conspiracy of Leipzig's ex-mayor, Karl Goerdeler, and General Beck. When, in July 1944, the plotters did not manage to kill Hitler, Haushofer *filis* was one of the hundreds (or perhaps thousands) rounded up by Himmler's police. He was murdered by the SS in a Berlin prison a few days before the liberation of the capital. Allen Welsh Dulles who, in *Germany's Underground* (Macmillan) describes Albrecht Haushofer as "a typical outgrowth of the German Youth Movement which helped to bring on the disaster and was at last itself overwhelmed by it," quotes, in a translation, lines from the stirring sonnets found beside the poet's corpse:

"Early I saw the misery's whole course—  
I spoke my warning, but not harsh  
enough nor clear!  
How guilty I have been I now know  
here . . ."

He was one of the 29 German writers who, during the time of the Third Reich (according to Bayard Quincy Morgan's estimate, in a recent issue of *Books Abroad*) met death by execution, maltreatment, or suicide.

Should we include Pastor Niemoeller among the two score German writers

who suffered arrest, imprisonment or torture? The rebellious sermons he preached, first at his church in Dahlem, and later before fellow prisoners at Dachau, testify to his mastery of style and his strong objections to Nazi interference in church matters. Yet he never condemned Nazism as a whole, and he even volunteered for military service under Hitler! It was for protesting against the pastor's incarceration that Ernst Wiechert was sent to Buchenwald; his gruesome "camp experiences" are superbly described in *Forest of the Dead* (Greenberg Publishers).

While Niemoeller is a controversial figure, his colleague, Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, is not. A saintly man who considered Hitler an instrument of evil, as early as February, 1933, he publicly thundered against a system which substituted the Fuehrer for God. Later he headed an illegal Church Training College—somewhere in Northern Germany. Then he became involved in the Goerdeler-Beck conspiracy, and was arrested by the Gestapo in April, 1943. For two years he languished in various jails and concentration camps, comforting his fellow prisoners and writing a volume on ethics (to be published in New York shortly). On April 9, 1945, Bonhoeffer was executed—by special order of Himmler—at the Flossenburg concentration camp. Quotations from the deeply moving poems he wrote in prison can be found in the introduction to his theological work, *The Cost of Discipleship*, recently published by Macmillan. Realizing that his death was certain, this Christian humanist asked it to be the "most solemn feast on the road to eternal freedom," concluding with these lines:

"Long did we seek you, freedom, in  
discipline, action and suffering,  
Now that we die, in the face of God  
himself, we behold you."

True Christians are also Werner Bergengruen and Reinhold Schneider, a Protestant and a Catholic, respectively,



who suffered under the Third Reich and are now widely read in Germany. Schneider managed to outwit the Nazi censors with an "historical" novel, attacking the Spaniards' brutal oppression of the Indians. Actually a clever attack on the Nazi persecution of allegedly inferior races, this interesting book was recently published in America as *Important Mission* (Gresham Press).

In another camp was Erich Knauf, an ardent Socialist who was executed by the Gestapo in 1944. One cannot here, of course, mention all the other German "Aragons," but reference must be made to that idealistic youth, Eugen Gottlob Winkler who, in 1936, at the age of 24, killed himself in Munich when he learned that the Gestapo was about to arrest him. Just before his death he walked once more to the house where his idol, Thomas Mann, once had lived. Winkler's work, published posthumously, contains literary essays, stories, and many unforgettable poems.

Apart from those who paid with their lives for their underground activities, Guenther Weisenborn paid the highest price among the anti-Nazi writers for loyalty to his ideals. This Rhinelander was only 26 when, in 1928, his first drama, *U-Boat S 4* opened simultaneously in 16 German theaters. This tragedy of a submarine crew was followed by other dramas (including a stage version of Gorky's *Mother*, written in collaboration with Bert Brecht), and by novels. For a time during this productive period he lived in Argentina where he worked on a farm. He returned to Germany only to witness, in 1933, the burning of his books. He was so disgusted with the Third Reich that he emigrated to the USA, but his passionate desire to work against Hitler drove him back to his native land.

For five years he was active in a group called "The Red Chapel." Its organizer, a lieutenant, Harro Schulze-Boysen, flirted with Communism, though many of his associates had other political predilections

or were simply unaffiliated anti-Fascists like Weisenborn. Through his aristocratic wife, Schulze-Boysen obtained a job in Goering's Air Ministry. His position enabled the group to obtain important military information which was forwarded to the Soviets by a secret radio transmitter. In 1942 the "Chapel" was discovered by the Gestapo and many of its members—between 80 and 400—were executed. "It seems to be a habit in Europe to drench spiritual seeds in blood," Schulze-Boysen wrote to his parents before he was executed. Three years after his death a poem was found where he had written it on the wall of his cell at the Berlin Gestapo headquarters. One of the stanzas, roughly translated, reads as follows:

*The ultimate arguments*

*Are never the rope nor the block,  
And those who judge us today  
Don't sit in the Court of the World.*

Originally Weisenborn was condemned to death; later the sentence was reduced to a prison term. After having "enjoyed" a good many jails and concentration camps, he was liberated from his cell at Luckau by the Red Army, in 1945. For a while he served as mayor of Luckau and reorganized work on the nearby farms. Then he moved to Berlin where he has been active as a co-director of a theater, an editor of a literary magazine, and as president of the *Schutzverband Deutscher Autoren*, the German Authors' League.

Recently the Hamburg Schauspielhaus presented his witty folk drama, *Ballad of Eulenspiegel*. The jester is shown siding with the 16th century rebellious peasants of Franconia. To judge by the reviews that have reached us it must be a fascinating work, skillfully mixing genuine poetry with stark realism. In one striking scene a spokesman of the Imperial Army, intent on crushing the revolt, wonders why the peasants should wish to sacrifice life for an ideal. "Freiheit—what sort of animal is that?" he asks just as a few years ago an SS leader

might have asked the same ironic question. "It is an animal that lives on roots and weeds," the Imperial officer is told: "Yet, driven by hunger, it may also swallow princes, bishops, and fat burghers. It is very old by now, but, strangely, the older it becomes, the stranger it grows—like wine. It may fall sick, but it never dies. At times it departs from its country, but it always returns, sooner or later. Tell your general that Freiheit has returned to Germany and, currently, is making its home with the peasants in the woods."

Weisenborn is best known in post-war Germany for his drama, *The Illegals* that was played on more than a hundred German stages, and is currently a hit abroad—both in Moscow and La Paz, Bolivia. It is dedicated to the Red Chapel, to the late Harro Schulze-Boysen and his brave associates. In it, Walter, the son of a Berlin innkeeper, learns about the resistance movement from a waitress. "What kind of people belong to your group?" he asks. "Of what party affiliations are they?" And she replies, "There is only one party: Freedom. Nothing else interests us . . . We do not ask for party affiliations. We merely ask: Is the person worth while?"

Walter joins the group and broadcasts messages to the terrorized Germans through a secret transmitter until he is caught by the police. He knows that an anti-Fascist has little chance for survival—yet he chooses to fight, together with a few other idealists, the nearly all-powerful Gestapo. He even knows that, should he live to see the end of Hitlerism, life after victory would not be Utopian. After the liberation the survivors would be prematurely old, tired, ugly, sick. They would be kicked around by those whose strength had not been sapped in opposing the Nazi machine of oppression, and they would smile, sadly and in embarrassment: "The world lionizes victims, but it soon forgets them."

The dramatist's comment fits the actual case. Important jobs, not only in the various trades and industries, but also in education, journalism, and the arts often go not to those who spent years fighting the Nazis, but to the well-fed, smug collaborationists, if not to outright Fascists.

On the other hand, the fact remains that the German Aragons were far from numerous, and that they were not able to galvanize a resistance movement such as France had. It seems fair to ask why Germany didn't produce more Aragons. Perhaps this problem is somewhat beyond the scope of the present article. This much should be said, though, for fairness' sake: that historical, socio-economic factors rather than any inherent "racial" inferiority on the part of the German intellectuals precipitated their wholesale surrender to Fascism!

In 1837 the King of Hanover, tyrannical and greedy, abolished his country's liberal constitution and returned to the old absolutism. Thereupon seven professors of the University of Goettingen, including the famous philologists and collectors of fairy tales, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, publicly protested against this coup d'etat. It is true that they did not risk being thrown into death camps like Dachau or Buchenwald—they "merely" lost their positions and were forced to emigrate. Yet it is not likely that the King would have dared to jail those bold intellectuals, anyway—any maltreatment of the "Goettinger Sieben," idolized as they were by the masses, might have caused him to lose his throne.

A century later very few German intellectuals protested the outrages of Hitlerism, and since the masses, far from idolizing these non-conformists, against might have condemned them as "traitors," they rarely risked opening their mouths before having left the cursed soil of the Third Reich (Peculiarly, Thomas Mann kept silent for several years, even though he enjoyed the freedom and security of Switzerland). But it is not hard to under-

stand why the Germany of 1837 had no concentration camps, and the Reich of 1933 no "Goettinger Sieben." For in the meantime whatever revolutionary zeal had existed in the German lands had been crushed by Metternich, Bismarck, and Wilhelm II. Significantly, the Kaiser had ordered the German educators to "furnish ME (sic!) with material with which I can work within the State . . . a teacher should . . . prepare the young for resisting all revolutionary aims." Thousands of Germany's ablest and most sincere men were forced to emigrate after the ill-fated revolution of 1848, and again after Bismarck's Sozialistengesetz of 1878, aiming at the Social Democrats. Among these emigrants was the man who was to coin the slogan "Our country, right or wrong—when right to be kept right, when wrong to be put right," namely, Carl Schurz, as well as the parents of Wendell L. Willkie.

In France, the intelligentsia had prepared the country for its great Revolution, and intellectuals continued to oppose any regime they did not care for, from the autocratic rule of Charles X to the Quisling government of Marshall Petain. A Victor Hugo lampooned Louis Napoleon notwithstanding the fact that the latter, too, was a Frenchman—whereas in 1933 many German poets switched to Hitler because they could not see how they might oppose a "deutscher Mann" (although, actually, Hitler was an Austrian) who had been fated to become their supreme authority.

Around 1800 there had been no lack of German Aragons. After the French Revolution German students planted Liberty Trees, and one hundred-odd princes became jittery. When Napoleon's victorious armies swept Germany's dusty ground and abolished dozens of obsolete laws and institutions, they were welcomed by many broad-minded Germans as "unpatriotic" as old Goethe. Likewise, when the French were driven from the country, young Heinrich Heine was not the only

one to regret the Emperor's retreat from the scene, for this retreat paved the way for a century of stubborn reaction. Gradually Prussian discipline became more important than what Goethe had praised as the highest of man's treasures, namely, "Persoenlichkeit" (Personality). This tyranny of military discipline invaded the German school where the poet received his mental preparation along with the future jurist, physician, and theologian. Significant is the following episode narrated by the late Justice Louis D. Brandeis, a native of Kentucky who, as an adolescent, was sent to Germany for study. One day he was severely disciplined for having whistled to a roommate—whereupon the boy informed his parents that he had enough of German discipline: "In Kentucky you could whistle . . ."

But just because the intellectual climate of Germany was unfavorable for producing Aragons, due credit should be given to those few men and women who, overcoming their mental obstacles, inherited and otherwise, opposed the authorities throughout twelve bitter years of blackout and frustration. American publishers, who delight in printing the drivel from the pen of such late Nazis as Joseph Goebbels and Alfred Rosenberg, are here advised to have a good look at the works of such noble and gifted German men and women as Bergengruen, Kasimir Edschmid, Elisabeth Langgasser, the old Bernhard Kellermann of *Tunnel* fame, Schneider, and especially Weisenborn. The latter's autobiography, *Memorial*, just now published by Rowohlt, is among the most striking and most sincere prose works issued in post-war Germany.

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*The human race is in the best condition when it has the greatest degree of liberty.*  
ALIGHIERI DANTE

# *In the Service of the Torah*

By MARK M. KRUG

**A**N OUT-OF-TOWN visitor in the home of a community minded Jewish family in Chicago would undoubtedly hear, within a matter of a few days, his hosts remark, "The meeting will be held in the College," or, "The exhibit is in the College building." An inquiry would reveal that by "College" Chicago Jews mean The College of Jewish Studies, located in the Chicago Loop. The College is housed in the Jewish Education Building, which is owned and operated by the Board of Jewish Education, the parent organization of the College. This beautiful six-story building, which was purchased only five years ago, contains the offices of the Board, the classrooms, assembly halls, and the library of the College. It also houses the Mid-western offices of some of the important American Jewish organizations, among them—the Jewish Welfare Board, the United Synagogue of America, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Pioneer Women, the Labor Zionists, and the Zionist Youth Commission. But the Jewish Education Building, often referred to as the College Building, is primarily a central meeting point and a throbbing hub of cultural activity of the Chicago Jewish community. It can be said without reservation that most of the worthwhile city-wide cultural undertakings of Chicago Jewry take place in this building. A glance at the record of meetings held in the Jewish Education Building, in 1949, will show among others, a city-wide celebration of the National Jewish Book and Music Months, an exhibit by the Jewish Museum of New York, monthly or bi-monthly meetings of most

women's organizations in the city—from Mizrahi women to the Johanna Lodge, rabbinical meetings, receptions to Israeli poets, Jacob Kahan and Sh. Shalom, Jewish Art Exhibits, receptions and memorial meetings for Yiddish writers and poets, a Purimada for Jewish youth groups, a lecture on the life and works of Rabbi Abraham Cook, a Hebrew Arts Festival, a series of courses on Israel, on Great Jewish Books, and many, many others.

Most, if not all of these activities are either sponsored or co-sponsored by the College of Jewish Studies. It is indeed the conception held by the College, formulated and espoused by its President, Dr. Samuel M. Blumenfield, that the College as an institution of higher learning must concern itself to a large degree with stimulating all forms of Jewish cultural life and activity in the community that makes it a unique institution in the United States. Unique, because most similar Jewish institutions limit themselves to the training of teachers and rabbis leaving other phases of adult education to organizations, lodges and clubs. But it is Dr. Blumenfield's conviction that since Jewish cultural activities are practically the only non-controversial platform for unity in Jewish life, they should be stimulated and directed by an all-embracing community-wide institution like the College of Jewish Studies.

In its twenty-five years of existence, the College has succeeded admirably in stimulating, guiding and uniting the forces working for the revival of Jewish culture in all its facets and thus has made an incidental but nevertheless an inval-



uable contribution to Jewish life by becoming a unifying force in the midst of partisan, political, and organizational diversity. The College is indeed *Jewish* without any adjectives; it is not conservative, although many of its teachers and students are members of conservative congregations; likewise, it is not reform, and it is not orthodox, although the adherents of these religious denominations are very well represented on the faculty and on the student body.

During the twenty-five years of dynamic activities, the students, the alumni, the faculty, and the tens of thousands of men and women who participate in the College's varied programs have become convinced that the unifying forces and factors in Jewish life are much more significant and much more potent than those which divide them.

This unity was not achieved as it sometimes happens with Jewish communal institutions, by adopting an attitude of cautious and weak-kneed neutrality on vital issues. While during its history the College has undoubtedly served a substantial number of non-Zionists, its former directors, its President, its faculty, and the overwhelming majority of the students have participated actively and openly in the struggle for the establishment of the Jewish State, and stimulated love for the land of Israel, and interest in its literature, art, music and drama.

The College of Jewish Studies was organized in 1925, as an affiliate of the Board of Jewish Education by Dr. Alexander M. Dushkin, then the director of the Board. The College set for itself two primary aims: 1. To respond to the need of young men and women for systematic study in the various phases of Jewish learning and culture on an academic level, and, 2. to encourage American Jewish young men and women to train for the profession of Hebrew and Sunday school teaching. It was clear then to Dr. Dushkin, and it is even more evident today, that the second largest Jewish

community in the world and the other Jewish communities in the midwest, cannot and should not rely on getting their teacher supply from the East, primarily from New York, whose two Hebrew Teachers Institutes graduate each year an average of 25 to 30 prospective teachers, hardly enough for New York itself. Dr. Dushkin, one of the foremost American-Jewish educators and presently chairman of the Undergraduate Department of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, established at first three basic units, a Teachers Training Department, non-professional academic courses for young adults, and a Central Hebrew High School to provide the transitory link between the elementary Hebrew schools and the College. The College of Jewish Studies started in a small room on Chicago's West Side with five students, but the enrollment gradually increased and a few years later the school moved to the Loop and maintained classrooms first, at 30 North Dearborn Street and later at 220 South State Street. In 1946 the College moved to its present Jewish Education Building at 72 East Eleventh Street.

After Dr. Dushkin's departure from the College, to become the executive director and then the executive vice president of the Jewish Education Committee in New York, Dr. Leo L. Honor became its head. Dr. Honor came to Chicago after relinquishing his post as registrar of the Teachers Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York, and it was under his leadership that the College developed into a full-fledged academic institution. Dr. Honor is serving today with great distinction as Professor of Education at Dropsie College in Philadelphia.

Today, in 1950, the year of its Twenty-fifth Anniversary, the College has an enrollment of 716 students, and an additional 2,000 Chicago youth and adults are reached regularly through its extension activities program. To quote from its



1949-50 Annual, the College aims "To provide varied opportunities for pursuing organized study in the history, language, literature and religion of the Jewish people. It also provides professional training to young men and women who wish to prepare themselves for Hebrew teaching as a vocation, and for teaching in Jewish Sunday schools, or for leading and supervising Jewish club and group work."

An imaginary trip to those rooms of the Jewish Education Building which are used by the College should begin with the large recreation room. It is used primarily for student and alumni social and cultural activities, the most important of them being the Melaveh Malkah. The Melaveh Malkah which means the ushering out of the Sabbath Queen on Saturday evening is the observance of an ancient tradition, which was initiated and developed by the College. These evenings are usually devoted to Jewish personalities, holidays, outstanding events in Jewish current life or history, and are featured by Chassidic-like singing and dancing. It would not be correct to call these evenings, "extra curricular" activities because in the College the Melaveh Malkahs, the Student Forums, and the Art Festivals are not an added activity but form an integral part of the curriculum and the educational program of the College.

Dr. Blumenfeld explained the reasons for this unique approach to student activities in an article in the Religious Education Magazine, published in July, 1945 in which he wrote: "These social cultural events are eagerly sought by the students and the alumni and it is sound education to encourage young people in their pursuit of wholesome, positive forms of self-expression. But there are deeper reasons for the thought and attention the College has given to student-programs, for it is precisely this type of free-student efforts that offers opportunities for new forms of Jewish living in America. Judaism has

always emphasized the value of deed over creed and the importance of practice—Mitzvah—over mere intellectual speculation or contemplation. Likewise, modern education stresses the value of experience as the most effective way of achieving the ends of education. The College as a progressive institution devoted to the advancement of Jewish life, welcomes the opportunity of assisting its students in their quest for Jewish experience on a dignified and satisfying level."

The Melaveh Malkahs which are usually held about once a month attract an average of several hundred young men and women, also provide many hundreds of adults with the opportunity to spend an evening in a truly Jewishly inspired atmosphere.

The second floor is occupied by the Leaf Library of the College of Jewish Studies. This Library which serves both the College and the Board of Jewish Education had a very modest beginning, but it is now the largest Jewish library in Chicago and in the midwest. It has over 30,000 books in Hebrew, Jewish, English, and other languages. It is a veritable treasure of books both old and new in the field of Biblical research, Jewish history, Jewish philosophy, religious thought, and Zionism. The Talmud and its Commentaries, the Midrashic literature and Rabbinics are especially well represented. While the library serves many serious scholars and writers in Chicago and neighboring cities who find its shelves and spacious reading and study rooms invaluable in their literary pursuits, it does not neglect the contemporary Jewish scene by subscribing to more than 150 English, Hebrew, and Yiddish periodicals.

The Library Information Service is proud of the fact that it answers daily questions pertaining to Jewish life, Jewish literature, and religious observance which come to it in an ever increasing volume. The library is directed by Dr.

Judah Rosenthal, a well-known Hebrew scholar and writer.

But the hub of the College is the third floor where the classes are held. There on any week-day afternoons and evenings or on Sunday mornings a visitor will find Rabbi Abromowitz, the author of "The Talmud as a Repository of Jewish Tradition," teaching a class on the Talmud. He would look in vain for the traditional swaying and chanting which used to accompany the study of Talmud in Eastern European Yeshivot but he will find a true and profound reverence for the greatest masterpiece of Rabbinical literature. In another class students study Hebrew literature given by Professor Chaim Rothblatt, noted author of textbooks and Hebrew literary critic. Professor Morris Altman, the beloved faculty advisor to the Student Council, lectures on contemporary Israel prose, poetry, and essay. In still another classroom, Dr. Meyer Waxman, one of the foremost Hebrew scholars and writers in this country and author of the "History of Jewish Literature," teaches the religion and ethics of the Bible. The College is proud that Dr. Simon Rawidowicz, one of the foremost contemporary Jewish philosophers, has recently joined its faculty as Professor of Hebrew Philosophy and Chairman of the Graduate Studies Department.

The College of Jewish Studies is divided into the following departments: The Department of Advanced and Graduate Hebrew Studies, departments of training of Hebrew and Sunday school teachers, General Jewish Studies, and the Preparatory Department.

The Department of Advanced Hebrew Studies awards its graduates the Degree of Bachelor of Hebrew Literature. The possessors of a Bachelor Degree may pursue their studies in the Graduate Department leading to the Degrees of Master and Doctor of Hebrew Literature. While the College has the authority and does award academic degrees its students

pursue the great Jewish tradition of studying the Torah l'shma, the study of the Torah for the sake of heaven, for it was the particular genius of the Jewish people that they have imbued thousands upon thousands, not only of its scholars and teachers, but its multitudes with the desire to study the Torah and the Talmud for the purpose of worshipping the Almighty and the self-edification of the soul. The college is proud of the fact that many of its students come back to the College even after they receive their degrees or diplomas. Indeed many are the men and women who have attended the College practically all the years of its existence.

The Hebrew and Sunday School Teachers' Training Department aims to prepare Jewish young men and women for the Hebrew teaching profession and to provide well-trained teachers for the Sunday religious schools. It is important to add that this department also offers an opportunity for Hebrew and Sunday school teachers for in-service-training. Of the 181 graduates in the various departments of the College, 119 completed the required courses in the departments of the training of Hebrew and Sunday school teachers. These graduates serve, not only the 75 school units affiliated with the Chicago Board of Jewish Education, but many of them are teachers, principals, and educational directors in many Jewish communities throughout the country. The close and effective cooperation which exists between the Teachers' Training Department of the College and the supervisory staff of the Board of Jewish Education has made it possible to raise the standards of eligibility for the teaching positions in Hebrew and Sunday schools. In order to attain professional security and dignity and an equitable standard of living for the Hebrew teaching profession, the College has cooperated with the Board in enforcing a uniform Salary Scale and a Code of Personnel Practices. Not all of the graduates of the

Teachers' Training Department have become teachers, some of them are leaders in Jewish youth organizations and others hold positions of leadership in many communal organizations and groups.

Jewish educators, especially those engaged in training of Hebrew teachers have pointed to the fact that this training suffers greatly because an average student enrolled in a Hebrew teachers institute or college is at the same time pursuing a full course of general academic studies. Consequently, there is not sufficient time left for his Hebrew studies. In order to overcome this handicap the College of Jewish Studies established in 1946, a Summer Camp Institute for the training of Hebrew teachers known as Camp Sharon in Buchanan, Michigan. Dr. Blumenfeld, the founder of Sharon, felt convinced that the combination of formal Hebrew studies with recreational activities conducted in an atmosphere of intelligent and meaningful Jewish living will not only increase the Judaic knowledge of the campers, but what is even more important will give them an appreciation of religious observances, love for ethical precepts of Judaism, and devotion to the Jewish people and its destiny. The experience of four camp seasons has proved that these expectations were fully justified. Student campers of college age, advanced in Hebrew studies who have come from Chicago and other Jewish communities in the midwest have thoroughly enjoyed the experience of studying the Talmud, the Guide to the Perplexed by Moses Maimonides, Jewish history, Hebrew literature, the commentaries of the Bible, and the theory and practice of education on a shore of a beautiful lake and on clearings in the woods surrounding the camp. The instructors in Sharon are faculty members of the College and other well-known Hebrew scholars. Hebrew is spoken freely and naturally throughout the whole day of camp life. These social, cultural, religious, and recreational activ-

ities are well integrated and make every day a most satisfying and inspiring experience.

Following its policy of constant striving to adopt itself to the needs as they are felt in the community and to make an attempt to meet them, the College has opened six years ago special preparatory classes in general Jewish studies for young men and women of pre-college age, most of whom never attended a Hebrew or a Sunday school. These young people are given the opportunity to take courses in general Jewish history, Jewish sociology, beginning Hebrew, etc. The courses are conducted by a number of rabbis and Jewish scholars in the Chicago community who give freely of their time and effort. They are reform, orthodox and conservative rabbis, Yiddish writers and Hebrew poets. It is only fair to state that the third floor of the Jewish Education Building is one of the few places in Chicago where these men meet regularly in the spirit of comradeship and fellowship united as they are in common love for Jewish learning.

The picture of the activities of the College would not be complete if we were to fail to mention the role that the College plays in the field of Jewish adult education. It would be no exaggeration to say that during its twenty-five years of existence the College has given Jewish knowledge and inspiration to many, many thousands of men and women who year after year attend the series of courses not usually found in the traditional curriculum of institutions of Jewish learning. These courses, to mention but a few are: Jewish sociology, Jewish folkways, the Jewish community in America, Israel and the contemporary Scene, The Role of minorities in American Civilization, Jewish fine arts, Religious denominations in American Judaism, etc., etc. Such courses are organized as a rule in cooperation with groups and organizations which have evinced an interest in special fields of Jewish thought and experience.

It is a happy coincidence that in the year when the College of Jewish Studies celebrates its 25th Anniversary its president, Dr. Samuel M. Blumenfield, is marking his own 25th year of service in American Jewish education. Following his distinguished predecessors, Dr. Dushkin and Dr. Honor, Dr. Blumenfield had, in the twenty years of his work in the College of Jewish Studies, a vital part in its growth and development, and in its gradual transformation into a well-recognized academic institution of higher Jewish learning in this country. His vision, persistence and abiding devotion to Jewish learning and to the Jewish people have contributed greatly toward making the College what it is today—the heart of the cultural life of the second largest Jewish community in the world. Luckily, in his constant efforts and struggle to overcome the indifference to Jewish learning, the lack of financial resources, Dr. Blumenfield and his colleagues and co-workers had the splendid support of a group of distinguished laymen which includes Frank G. Marshall, Sigmund W.

David, Judge Harry M. Fisher, Benjamin R. Harris, Maxwell Abbell, and the late A. K. Epstein to mention but a few. The leaders of the College do not intend to rest on their laurels. Their future plans include the establishment of a chair in Jewish sociology, an exchange lectureship between the College and the Hebrew University, an Institute of Jewish Music, and a full-fledged Jewish Art Department.

The College of Jewish Studies merits the gratitude and even greater support from the Chicago Jewry for a job well done.

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*The Jews are among the aristocracy of every land. If a literature is called rich in the possession of a few classic tragedies, what shall we say to a national tragedy, lasting for fifteen hundred years, in which the poets and actors were also the heroes.*

GEORGE ELIOT





# The State of the Yiddish Theater

By MORRIS FREEDMAN

THE JEWISH ACTORS UNION not long ago celebrated its 50th anniversary at the Parkway Theater in Brooklyn by putting on selections from famous Yiddish plays. For nearly four hours, scenes from the tragedies of Jacob Gordon were alternated with those from the musical comedies and operettas of Abraham Goldfaden somewhat in the manner of a long Jewish banquet or wedding dinner in which course after course is served until one food is indistinguishable from another and you find yourself at last in a torpor. No other author was represented. Although the selections were intended to be superior examples of the American Yiddish Theater in its glory, they were not untypical. The whole evening offered some clues, I think, as to "what is wrong with the Yiddish Theater today," and why it is dying (if it is not already dead).

All of the plays were favorites along Second Avenue in the first two decades of this century, during the period of the Great Immigration. My parents and parents-in-law tell me that the Jewish people of the East Side jammed the theaters to see these plays. All of this provides the setting for a paradox: with only one exception, the time, the place, the characters, the problems, the background, the entire surface of the plays presented at the Parkway were East European. But life in Europe, as we have often been told, was hardly so idyllic as to invoke such unrelieved nostalgia. The solution to the paradox appears in the substance of the plays. While the trappings were East European, the themes were peculiarly embedded in America.

In some way or other, usually as a major theme, almost every one of the tragedies was concerned with family relations—children with parents, brother with brother, sister with sister. (Even the musical numbers, except the purely and charmingly comic ones, also brought in this theme in various forms.) In *Der Vilder Mensch*, the aged but still more or less vigorous father of two grown sons, a grown daughter, and a grown male—designated as the "idiot," the wild man of the title, a limping, lisping, semi-paralytic with touches of epilepsy, brings home a young blond wife. The brood is depressed and outraged, for the children have kept the memory of their mother sacred. In *Mirrah Effris*, the heroine delivers a long monologue to her children and their families about how ungrateful they have been to her who has sacrificed so much for them (sent them to the finest schools, given them the best clothes, etc.), who has secretly "soaked my pillow" with tears every night. Then there was *Der Yiddishe King Lear*, in which the hero's lot parallels that of the British King Lear.

Of this general theme, the family relationship, one particular aspect—that of the relation of children to the mother—seemed to have an especially compelling effect, reinforcing the widely held suspicion that Jewish life, at least in America, is basically matriarchal. On the two occasions when reference was made to the role of the mother in Jewish life, the audience broke into the sustained kind of applause that you hear at a news reel when the flag is shown on the screen.

Jewish life in Europe, apparently,



whatever unpleasant aspects it may have had, had at least one more or less fixed and attractive element, evidently of tremendous importance to the Jewish immigrants for whom these plays were manufactured: the tight family unit. The turbulent family situations constantly presented on the Second Avenue stages were rare occurrences in real Europe; or, rather, the *fear* of their occurrence was considerably weaker in Europe, if it existed at all. Certainly, the situations themselves were not commonplace in America. These plays, then, appear to be a symbolic acting out of the deep-seated fear of the dissolution of the Jewish family in America.

In Eastern Europe, anti-Semitism, among other things, kept the Jewish communities well-knit, self-contained. The youth were educated within the community, in the language, the customs, the morals, the taboos, the compulsions, the whole way of their parents. The renegade was rare. There was little, if any, opportunity to break out, if breaking out ever appealed to the youngsters—until, of course, the Wild West of America beckoned.

The early Jewish immigrants assimilated slowly. They kept their language and their ways (to the extent that sections of the East Side today still constitute spiritual portions of East European villages). But when it came time to set up new families, the New World asserted itself. The new parents-to-be themselves might have broken the pattern of family life in Europe when they left as young men and women, but the only model they had to follow was that of their parents. (And, in a sense, wasn't it a kind of guilt that compelled them to work ceaselessly until they could bring over the rest of the unit, their parents, brothers, sisters?) But American life provided no such wall as that which hemmed in East European Jewish life. For the American Jew born of immigrants, American life was completely anarchic by contrast with Europe:

he could let the religious ritual slip away; he could become educated in the ways of a new world; he could merely become educated, something his parents couldn't easily do; he could learn a new language, new customs; he (and she) could marry a Gentile (while this situation did not appear on the stage at the Parkway Theater, it is, of course, extremely popular in the everyday pulp literature of the Yiddish press); *he could, finally, reject his parents.* The basis of the imagined rejection took several forms: the parents were too old-fashioned, or ignorant, or restrictive; or, the children were selfish, grasping, callous, ungrateful, and so on and on.

As if to reinforce this fear of rejection, there runs throughout the tragedies a thin wail of self-pity. Every person in a sad situation is sharply and verbosely aware of how ill-treated he is. The laments rarely have any depth or even fundamental seriousness. The self-pity is a matter-of-fact shaking of the head, bowing of the shoulders, shedding of a few tears (or a bucket-full), more ritualistic than genuine. This is not merely a matter of inferior dramaturgy, where a more skilled playwright would provoke the pity in us less obviously and not in the voice of the person to be pitied. This attenuated wailing, while perhaps somewhat in the tradition of Jewish cataloguing of woes, was more immediately a part, I think, of the problem of settling in a new country. The stage echoed the sighs of uncertainty of the audience. And since the major *real* catastrophe was no more than uncertainty, the insecurity of pioneering, and not anything in the environment itself (America, after all, was actually hospitable), the lamenting has a factitious quality.

Now that Jewish roots are sunk into the American soil and the insecurity of the early settling has largely dissipated, self-pity is no longer valid and the wail on the stage echoes little in the audience. Now that the children have grown up

and generally proved not to be such monumental ingrates as was first feared, the theme of the dissolution of the family is no longer valid (at least not in the terms suggested by Second Avenue). The plays very obviously met a need only of their time. Today one cannot bring sympathy to them, only nostalgia, with everything (more of the tawdry than of the noble) that such a sentiment involves. They say nothing directly to my generation and speak only in memories to that of my parents.

Which brings us to the Parkway Theater. Although these plays have for some time been financially unsuccessful, the generation for which they were written shows a remarkable affection for them—but usually only of a theoretical nature: while everyone agrees the Yiddish Theater ought to be supported, actual Yiddish theaters remain empty through much of the season and audiences have to be corralled with all sorts of devices. One's sense of duty is regularly invoked, and attendance has something of the nature of going through an unpleasant but necessary ceremony, like a funeral or banquet. The night I attended the Parkway, however, it being a jubilee occasion, the place was packed, with standees ringing the orchestra. The people came quite voluntarily and obviously expected the evening to offer a full panorama of the glory that once was Second Avenue. The atmosphere was totally unlike that in a Broadway theater, where the members of the audience are generally strangers to each other. At the Parkway Theater there was one big family, noisy, inattentive, comfortably at ease, freely calling out to one another.

As the lights dimmed, a short, gray-haired man, the president of the Jewish Actors Union, came out to speak. Sitting near the stage, I could hear him. "At these events," he said in a voice that carried powerfully, but still was not heard toward the rear of the house, "it is always necessary to have a victim until

the audience's attention is gotten. I have volunteered for this job rather than have the actors disturbed." He spoke on for a while, saying nothing much, just gathering attention, scattered persons shushing vigorously, until a moderate silence spread slowly backward through the audience. During the performances themselves, however, the onlookers often became rapt to the point of forgetting they were in a theater. When the old man of *Der Vilder Mensch* was chucking his blond morsel under the chin, a woman in my row declared loudly in high indignation that it was a "*skandal*" for such an old man to take up with a spring chicken. ("Not that night, but another time I attended a Yiddish play, members of the audience called out every so often to the actors, 'Louder, if you please.'")

As each scene was introduced and identified and the actors announced, an appreciative "a-ah" of memory and anticipation went up. The audience knew the plays and performers well. It seemed that the more dull and difficult a particular scene was, the greater was the awe and respect: homage without understanding. During the monologue from *Der Yiddishe King Lear*, I stirred uneasily, having, unaccountably, sat through this play several times in my life. Near me, an older man, who had been nodding with his eyes closed (it was nearly midnight), woke with a start and stared at me sternly.

The master of ceremonies, Hymie Jacobson (an interesting personage in the Yiddish theater on the face of it: I understand he owns a legitimate theater and a vaudeville house on Second Avenue, and the Cafe Royal, the Sardi's of the Yiddish troupers and the original of the Broadway hit, *Cafe Crown*; he occasionally appears in Yiddish vaudeville himself), a bland, poised, brisk, pleasant man, introduced the scenes in a jargon that can best be described, I suppose, as American Yiddish, made up of colloquial expressions in English ("You ain't seen nothin' yet") and a Yiddish corrupted

with English words. He frequently exhorted the audience to keep the Yiddish classics alive, making such statements as "the plays will live so long as Yiddish is spoken." Where that place is, of course, he didn't mention; certainly it wasn't, strictly speaking, at the Parkway Theater that night.

One of the prominent things, at first glance, about these plays is the low level on which they were written. Daily soap opera and run-of-the-mill movies are superior to them in characterization, dialogue, unity of atmosphere, plotting, sheer good taste. The bad taste, I think, comprehends the other failings. In *Der Vilder Mensch* (the longest and most self-contained fragment), the blond young wife makes a pass at her "idiot" stepson, sending him off gibbering; the old man cannot lift his wife off the sofa to carry her into their bedroom (she has fallen across it in a drunken stupor after calling her husband "you old ox") because of a crick in his back, and he exits leering and smacking his lips at the audience; the "idiot," as though to cap this weird exhibition, has an epileptic fit on the stage. In *Schloimke, Charlatan*, the dignified, erect father of the family comes onto the stage after being depicted as a stern disciplinarian. He has gotten a bug about germanizing his family—their names, habits, etc. (Something about impressing a coming visitor to whom he wants to betroth his daughter who, of course, loves another.) As he issues his edicts, his *ménage*, previously in terror of him, destroy the whole mood and characterization by proceeding to burlesque him.

One could explain the cheapness of the plays in the usual way, that they were produced for mass and not too well educated audiences, and so on. I think, though, that there are other significant things. I've already suggested what I think is one reason for the falseness of the plays: they were not based on reality;

the exaggerations and distortions are from the world of fears and dreams, or, if you will, fear-dreams, a world in which everything goes; the bonds of credibility, restraint, intelligence are cut. But, as a matter of fact, such a situation can under other circumstances inspire some very interesting productions, e.g., Kafka (who says himself that he was encouraged in his "improbabilities" by the Yiddish plays of Jacob Gordon that he saw in Prague). However, the audiences of these plays—and the writers and the actors and the producers—had no serious literary tradition in which to place themselves. If I'm not mistaken, the roots of the American Yiddish Theater may be found just where the plant appeared: on Second Avenue in the early years of the century (or in European equivalents of the time). I mean this in the same sense that most contemporary popular movie drama and daily radio drama spring only from the media in which they exist today—a thousand or so years of dramatic art bringing little influence to bear on them. Yet apparently no one connected with the Parkway Theater celebration had any idea that the plays they put on were anything but "classics." The stuff was good because it was old, I suppose was the reasoning, and good also because it was occasionally quite turgid and difficult to get (not because of any subtlety but because of a rococo notion of style). Without a critical sense, obviously, dullness is equated with depth. (A lack of taste in their theater fare is not the only failing in sophistication of the immigrants, of course: consider their furniture, their reading matter, the radio programs they listen to, their tribal affairs—weddings principally, etc.) I understand that during its history Second Avenue has seen a handful of plays of high literary quality—which were not particularly successful with the audiences. But none such were displayed at the Parkway. (In this context, it is not surprising how little understood and celebrated among the Jewish

masses who know Yiddish are men like Bialik or Schneour or Ash or Peretz. Their works are largely the interest of intellectuals.)

Surprisingly (to me, at least), the acting was subtle, experienced, and as intelligent as the scripts allowed it to be; sometimes a good deal more intelligent. I was mainly surprised to find so many fine performers remaining true to the Yiddish stage when with their talents they might have transferred to Broadway or Hollywood as did Paul Muni and Joseph Buloff. Herman Yablokoff made the *idiot* a sympathetic figure, no easy job since the whole business was so grotesque; Charlotte Goldstein quickly and convincingly worked up to an emotional pitch in *Der Kreutzer Sonata*. In the musical comedy numbers, Dinah Goldberg and Art Lebedeff in *Der Bubbeh Yachneh* and Molly Picon in *Schmendrick* were abundantly delightful; but their medium and material were not necessarily Jewish: I think a Broadway audience would have gotten the same pleasure from their vibrant, skilled performances. Only a few scenes, and these mostly in the musical selections, looked like parodies of old-time movies; I had feared that many more would.

Marked by their absence were Maurice Schwartz and Menasha Skulnick. Schwartz was scheduled to appear, but Skulnick not. Their absence served to make not too evident the present disintegration of the Yiddish Theater. Schwartz, the classicist, whose meat is the kind of thing Gordon produced so prolifically, has been having chronic financial trouble. Every year the rumor is that he will not open the next season. It is also widely understood that the Jewish theatrical unions usually have to help pay off the members of his company. Skulnick, on the other hand, usually has a profitable season. But he has been soundly attacked by the Yiddishists and others for the impurity both of language and content in his performances. Plans are under way for Skul-

nick to appear in the *Ziegfeld Follies* on Broadway; this season he hasn't been on Second Avenue at all, his niche being filled by Molly Picon. It may well be, of course, that the Yiddish Theater of today is already in existence—with the Yiddish itself adulterated (Yiddish has always been an adaptable and adapting language), the subject matter contemporaneous, and the stage on Broadway, in Hollywood (although the Jewishness of Jewish life is usually masked in the films), on the radio, in television, and the audience all America.

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*It is easier to say what loyalty is not than to say what it is. It is not conformity. It is not passive acquiescence in the status quo. It is not preference for everything American over everything foreign. It is not an ostrich-like ignorance of other countries and other institutions. It is not the indulgence in ceremony—a flag salute, and oath of allegiance, a fervid verbal declaration. It is not a particular creed, a particular version of history, a particular body of economic practices, a particular philosophy.*

*It is a tradition, an ideal, and a principle. It is a willingness to subordinate every private advantage for the larger good. It is an appreciation of the rich and diverse contributions that can come from the most varied sources. It is allegiance to the traditions that have guided our greatest statesmen and inspired our most eloquent poets—the traditions of freedom, equality, democracy, tolerance, the tradition of the higher law, of experimentation, co-operation, and pluralism. It is a realization that America was born of revolt, flourished on dissent, became great through experimentation.*

HENRY STEELE COMMAGER  
Who Is Loyal To America?



# Judaeo-Christian Legends in Japan

By GEORGE F. ROHRlich

IN AOMORI PREFECTURE, located on the northern-most tip of Honshu Island, which is the largest of the four main islands constituting Japan, there is a small village named Herai. To reach it, the traveller coming from Aomori City, the prefectural capital, may either go straight south through mountainous terrain and, after circling Towada Lake of renowned beauty, enter from the west the valley in which the village is situated and follow it eastward and slightly downhill until he strikes Herai. Or else, he may take the coastal express train as far south as Shiriuchi, the crossing point to Hachinohe, a rather large city near the Pacific shore, then a small private railroad to the little town of Gonohe, and from there drive west and eventually enter the valley and follow it until he hits upon Herai Village. I chose this access as it is negotiated for the most part by means of railroad while the former necessitates driving all the way and over rough roads for which one needs a sturdy vehicle, preferably a jeep, which I did not have at my disposal. Even by this "easy" route, it took me over nine hours to get there, what with waiting for and changing buses and negotiating for the special favors of a driver and guide without whose friendly services I might not have got there at all. Even though I left Aomori City in the early afternoon, I and my little party did not reach Herai Village until very late that night. The party consisted of the driver, two or three friends and assistants of his, and Fumio, a boy of about fifteen years who had worked for the Occupation Forces in some dock-yard and picked up a strange

assortment of American vernacular which he offered to place at my disposal by serving as my interpreter.

What prompted my trip, which I had to crowd into one short weekend in August, 1948, while en route on official business, was my utter curiosity aroused by a United Press story published in *The Nippon Times* appearing in Tokyo on May 18, 1948, entitled "Villagers Claim Christ Lived, Died and is Buried in Japan." As I learned later, this was not the first newspaper account to appear in English, a similar one having been published at least as nearly as 1938, but it was the first to come to my attention. What it said was, briefly, this: According to a legend told by the villagers of Herai, Aomori Prefecture, Jesus Christ visited Japan when he was 21 years old, learned the Japanese language, assumed a Japanese name and continued to live in Japan for twelve or thirteen years, after which time he returned to Palestine. But he did not die there. Instead, his brother (sic) died in his place while Christ fled back to Japan. In Herai he lived and died at a ripe old age and was buried. Also the Virgin Mary was buried there. Both graves can be seen.

The newspaper story went on to say that ancient cooking utensils had been found near the site of Christ's house, that the villagers had a song which sounded like ancient Hebrew music and whose words they did not understand, and that corrupted versions of the Hebrew names of Adam and Eve were reportedly in use there as designations for husband and wife. One of the local families, Sawaguchi by name, even



claimed to be "direct descendants" of Christ and considered itself different in appearance from the Japanese (though this was not apparent to the UP reporter Earnest Hoberecht.)

As if all these claims were not sensational enough, the story finally mentioned that the villagers believed the Garden of Eden to be located near their village, although it was now covered up by lava from a volcano close by. It surely sounded fantastic. Yet, having read all this, I wanted to go and see for myself whatever there was to be seen.

## II

As I got off the express train at Shiriuchi to transfer to the small feeder line, I found that I had missed the connection. The next train to Gonohe Town was not to leave until about eight at night, which would have meant a delay of almost four hours. So I went about town inquiring if there were any other means of transportation which would get me to Gonohe sooner. Yes, there was to be a bus leaving in less than two hours. So I waited—and answered questions. Once you get off the beaten track, an American in Japan, even at this late stage, is still a matter for good-natured curiosity and gaping. I explained that I was headed for Herai Village. "Oh, so you want to see the tomb of Christ"?—The story of Christ in Herai seemed common knowledge. Villagers in Herai were said to be Christians. The name of the Sawaguchi family appeared to be well known.

The bus finally came after considerable delay. It seemed more than ready for the junk heap and I doubted if it would ever get me as far as Gonohe. But it did, to my surprise, actually about two hours before the train would have taken me there. Much to my regret, however, it turned out that I had hurried merely to wait longer. There was absolutely no vehicle from Gonohe to Herai until late

at night or the next morning. Yet, in order to be back in Aomori City by Sunday night, I had to make an early start on my return trip the following morning. I simply had to get to Herai that night. The trouble was that neither did I know Mr. Sawaguchi, nor did Mr. Sawaguchi know me or even have warning that I was coming to see him. That problem was taken care of by the bus driver. It so happened that a member of his family, a sister I believe, was working for the Sawaguchi family and staying in their house. He offered personally to take me to them, introduce me, and see that I was put up for the night, no matter how late we got there.

At no time during my two-year stay in Japan, was the family-like coherence of the Japanese impressed upon me more strongly than on that bus ride toward Herai. I wish I could have known more about the relationships between all these people and those whom we picked up, left off, or passed on the way. It all seemed like one big homecoming—which, in a way it was, as it was Saturday night—with all the earmarks of a festive reunion among friends, relatives, parents, and children. Along the way, storekeepers would give fruits and refreshments to the driver, conductor, and others. Children and other members of the families of some passengers seemed to have walked one or two stops to meet the bus at an advance point and welcome those whom they were expecting. It was such a highly emotional joyful affair that I wonder to this day whether or not it was a special occasion of some sort. At the last stop, when all remaining passengers got off except myself, people brought the driver and his helpers food and "sake," the traditional much-loved rice wine. After that was consumed with much gayety, we started on the final stretch, which was not strictly a part of the ordinary bus route, to get to Sawaguchi's place. It was eleven o'clock when, finally,

we reached the house, a spacious structure built from solid hardwood in traditional Japanese style with a high and heavy roof. Aside from the Sawaguchi family, it housed their horse and much hay, which spread a fragrant odor. An open fireplace with a big kettle was in the center. Mr. and Mrs. Sawaguchi welcomed us and bade us sit around the almost extinct fire. I explained through Fumio, my little interpreter, the purpose of my coming and apologized for our late and unannounced arrival. A few friendly words were exchanged, then we were assigned places to sleep and given plenty of quilts to lie on which were spread on the floor in Japanese fashion with mosquito nets overhead.

### III

The next morning we arose shortly after four. First, I was to see the place where Jesus' house is said to have stood. It was a small plateau, now a rice paddy, with a grand view over the peaceful valley. There was nothing remarkable about the place, no sights or relics were offered as proof or evidence of Christ's earthly sojourn there. The common name of the place to this day is said to be "the foreigner's residence." I was more anxious to see the graves. These were located on another hill, even closer to Sawaguchi's house but well hidden from the street. Ascending the hill we passed a few tombstones no different from those one can see in any other Japanese graveyard. Only a few yards away from these, however, were the two monuments marking the alleged tombs of Christ and the Virgin Mary. They were rather unusual, consisting of two equal four-sided wooden poles about eight feet high and perhaps 25 feet apart, both rather new in appearance and hardly weatherbeaten. This fact, however, surprised me only at first sight. Then I remembered that it was common practice in Japan to rebuild holy shrines, almost all made of wood, every twenty

years or so on or near their original location and in exactly their original form. What surprised me no end, however, was what I saw on the first of these poles. There on what purported to be Christ's tombstone were three letters in vertical succession, reading, I was told, "Shirai (or Jurai) Taro Tenku" the first two of which were explained to be the Japanese name taken on by Christ when he came to live in Japan, and the last word meaning "heavenly." On top of the pole, not far above the first letter where one might have expected to find a cross, was a six-pointed star of David! I started to ask all sorts of questions of my host. But my Japanese was entirely inadequate for this kind of a topic and Fumio's limited English vocabulary was, unfortunately, likewise unsuited for an inquiry of such type. How I wished I could get my questions across and make sense of the answers! But like it or not, I had to rely more on my own observation and judgment. It happened to be Sunday, early in the morning. Now if this man, Mr. Sawaguchi, really was a Christian, one would have expected him to kneel down and say a prayer or, at least, make the sign of the cross. He did neither. His attitude was rather matter-of-fact, as though he were saying, "here I'm telling and showing you what's what and the rest is up to you."

We walked back to the house, Sawaguchi-san, Fumio, and I. I had a good look at this man who professed to be of the stock of the kin of Jesus. He was a well and sturdily built peasant of about fifty, perhaps 5 feet 6 inches in height, with a broad and rather benign face, a balding head and a pair of heavy work hands. Certainly, he was not the most "typical" Japanese I had met, as far as looks were concerned, for his eyes were not much slanted and there was little if any of the Mongol fold visible in his lids. True, there are similar types to be found among the Jews. But then, how many Japanese had I seen who looked just

about the same, their facial features and body build reminding one, except for the dark eyes and hair, of stout slavic peasants rather than our stereotype of a Japanese. As we walked, I asked him about his family. I forget if he said he had five or six children, mostly sons. The thing that sticks in my memory was the way in which he added that his oldest son had been killed in the war. He said this and followed it with a laugh. For a split second I was shocked to the marrow. Then I remembered that it was part of traditional Japanese etiquette to relate the saddest events to all but the most intimate friends with a broad smile, partly in order not to reveal one's emotions and partly to avoid imposing upon or embarrassing the listener. That it had the opposite effect with me was my fault, not his, I realized. Yet I could not help feeling more than before—perhaps quite unjustly—that there was little to suggest a Christian or, for that matter, Jewish heritage in him.

As we reached the house, I asked Mrs. Sawaguchi and another woman who was present about the song, said to be of Hebrew origin. They sang it for me a number of times. To my ears it did indeed have a somewhat familiar ring, not unlike some old Jewish melodies. But again not a little Japanese music reveals such similarity. As I was not able to take down the melody, at least I recorded as nearly as I could, the sounds of the "words." Japanese to whom I showed these tell me they don't make sense to them, and at least one Hebrew scholar to whom I sent a copy could not identify them as Hebrew either. The four lines of the song are given below:

Na - ni - ya do - ya - ra - yo - u  
 Na - ni - ya do - na - ra  
 Sa - ri - da - a - di - si - i  
 Na - ni - ya do - ya - ra - yo - o

Time was flying, the few hours available to me until the departure of the bus which was to take me back to Gonohe were almost over. I took a few pictures

of Mr. Sawaguchi and his family and of their house and yard which I promised to send them as a small token of my gratitude for their hospitality. Mr. Sawaguchi in turn, presented me with what he said was his last copy of an illustrated little booklet in Japanese about Herai and its Christ legend. (This turned out to be a publication of the railway company servicing the local area. In addition to giving the story of Christ's alleged visit and return to Japan, his life and death at Herai, etc., as here related, and showing pictures of Mr. Sawaguchi and of the memorable places, the booklet offers a rather weird theory claiming Japan and, in particular the vicinity of Herai, as the cradle of "Sumerian" civilization. The author's ambition for historical originality is outdone only by his obvious commercial zeal. But this I learned only upon my return to Tokyo where I had the pamphlet translated.)

Without attempting to see the site of "paradise," I left Herai that same morning at seven A.M. to make connections back to Aomori City. Part of the way I enjoyed the company of an employee of the local railway company who spoke and understood a little English. I had met him on my way up and he had been helpful in giving me directions. Coming home from work, he, too, had taken the late train and bus to Herai, where he lived, and was now returning to work. A number of workers going down in the bus with me seemed to have the same hard work schedule. Yet, on the whole, this bus offered a different sight from the one I had ridden the night before. There were several women in it with babies strapped to their backs holding rice balls in their little hands and nibbling at them from time to time. Then there was a girl in her dark blue student uniform, copied from sailors' blouses, worn by girls of school age all over Japan. Also there were some men in other than work clothes. All these people seemed to be going to town to visit or shop. As we

continued our journey on the local train to Shiriuchi, I kept quizzing the railway employee about Herai and its inhabitants. He claimed to be a Christian himself and stoutly maintained in the face of my frankly doubtful queries that the other villagers too were Christians. Otherwise he had little to add to what I had already learned.

## IV

The whole thing seemed too phoney to take seriously. The question that lingered on my mind was this: What historical event or memory surviving in that locality may have given rise to the legend? How did the story of Christ, certainly not uppermost in the conscience of the common people in other parts of Japan, strike root and bear such strange fruit in the isolated village of Herai of all places? What is the significance of the alleged Hebrew remnants in local speech and song? Even if they were not truly Hebrew at all, how was the idea that they were ever conceived? And how did this one truly authentic Jewish mark, the star of David (not a common ornament in Japan) find its way on the tombstone said to mark the resting place of Christ?

As I was turning over these questions in my mind, naturally I talked of them to other people. Back in Aomori City, I ran into an Army Chaplain who was stationed there. Although he himself had not been to Herai, the story was not news to him. He had met a missionary who for many years had been a resident of Japan and spoke Japanese fluently. She had paid a visit to Herai, so he told me, to speak to Mr. Sawaguchi. He happened to be absent, so she spoke to his father. To her surprise, the old man, when questioned about the matter, reportedly replied that he knew nothing at all about it, but that this was all "his son's business" and that she might talk to him about it. If such was the case, obviously, the Chaplain opined, the "tradition" must have been of very recent date indeed.

Probably, he felt, the whole thing was a sheer propaganda hoax, fabricated out of whole cloth from beginning to end, presumably at a time when the tide of Japanese jingoism was running high and its propagandists were eager to have Japan appear in everything—why not in western civilization, too? This, he said, was also the opinion of the missionary who did not recall hearing anything at all of such a legend until about fifteen years ago.

This was a sobering testimony all right and it left little to be answered by interpolation. On the other hand, did it not attribute to the perpetrators of the swindle—if such it was, pure and simple—a degree of imagination which was entirely out of the ordinary? Does it not stand to reason that even they would hardly have mustered the temerity to put forward such a story without some basis in local lore, however slight or remote, which would suggest such a peculiar subject and lend at least some credence to it?

As I thought about it, a memory of my school days came back to me. It too may date back fifteen years or more. At that time I remember reading in some European, probably Austrian, newspaper or magazine, whose name I can no longer remember, as part of a series of articles on Japan a conjecture that the Japanese whose origin as a nation had never been established, might be the descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel. According to my recollection, this was reported as a Japanese rather than a foreign view. Well, here I was in Japan. I had stumbled on a clue which tied right in with this strange tale. Was there no more to be found out about it?

## V

I kept asking people in Tokyo with whom I was acquainted and thought likely to know about or at least take an interest in such a matter. One of them was a Protestant Minister, the Reverend



H., a Japanese of a highly refined type, who used to attend Jewish religious services in Tokyo every Friday night with a regularity that could have made many a Jewish soldier or civilian official of the Occupation Forces blush. This he did because, as he told me, he was interested in Hebrew and in Old Testament exegesis.

It was through the Reverend H. that I stumbled across a strange book which seemed to hit the bull's eye. It was called *Origin of Japan and Japanese* written by one Jenishiro Oyabe, and published by Koseikaku in Tokyo in 1929.

Before I even opened it—incidentally it opens like most Japanese books from left to right—a design on the blue linen cover attracted my attention. It was a golden star of David, and written in it in golden Hebrew letters were the Hebrew words “kol adonai,” the voice of the Lord. The pages immediately following the title page consisted of a number of pictorial tables. Some of them reminded me of the illustrations one finds in old hagadoth showing Jewish men and women and groups of both as they may have looked in biblical times. This was true especially of one picturing two men (Moses and Aaron?) walking through the sea with high waves receding on either side of them, and of another showing women at a well. Maybe they were taken from such sources. Other pictures seemed to be reproductions of old pottery portraying people's daily activities. Then there were photographs of modern Japanese scenes, religious and others, which were juxtaposed obviously for the purpose of comparison. Finally, there were pictures whose meaning in the context I could not easily guess, such as portraits of Brahms, Tolstoy, Marx, Darwin, accompanied by pictures of what seemed to be Ainu men; also a photograph of a group of Arabs against a typical near-Eastern background. My curiosity was sufficiently aroused to want to know more about the book's contents. I had a good part of it

translated into English and English summaries prepared of the rest.

Here seemed to be a study by an author who, judging from his schooling and scholastic attainments, was well qualified to undertake it. As we learn from the preface to Mr. Oyabe's book, he went to the United States at the age of 19 and stayed 13 years. He attended Yale University and acquired the Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy Degrees. He traveled widely in Asia and, after returning to Japan seems to have taken to writing. The book *Origin of Japan and Japanese* seems to be his second major work. In it he attempted no less than to prove the close kinship of Japan and Israel.

But, alas, instead of confirming himself to a sober presentation of the evidence to prove his thesis, what a confusing mixture it is of conjecture, ideology, jingoism, and flowery oratory! If the major part of its 393 pages had never been written, how much more seriously one could take what would be left of its comparative social anthropology. Unfortunately, it seems the author was more interested in representing the Japanese as “God's chosen people” than in merely exploring their deep dark past.

Briefly, Oyabe maintains—if the translator and myself understood the book correctly—that both the Ainus (of whom only few have survived to this day and who are generally believed to be aborigines of Japan) and the Japanese proper immigrated to their present homeland from Asia Minor. The Ainus, he thinks, are the descendants of the old Jebusites who, having been defeated by the Israelites, moved from their native Edom, via North Korea to Japan where he estimates they arrived about 3,000 years ago. The Japanese, on the other hand, he believes to be, like the Jews, direct collateral descendants of the old Hebrews who immigrated into Japan from the biblical Haran, which he places in Armenia. There, he thinks, the followers of Elijah



supported by the tribes of Gad and Manasseh were defeated by some enemy and thereafter migrated to Persia, Afghanistan, and then to Tibet. There they split into two groups, one moving through Siberia into Korea and thence to Japan; the other southward into Siam, South China, and finally to Japan's southernmost island of Kyushu. They are "God's chosen people" as are the Jews, whom he holds in high esteem for their special ability and the great personalities they have produced. (Actually he seems rather confused as to which of the great men he refers to were Jews and which were not, just as he is confused about the scope of contemporary Jewry and about its movements and aspirations, such as, e. g. Zionism.) To prove this kinship he undertakes comparative studies of the respective religious and civil institutions, manners and customs. In so doing he refers frequently to the Bible, which he interprets rather freely, both linguistically, especially in regard to place names and geography, and as to its contents.

To me the most interesting part, and one which can be read and appreciated out of its context was the comparison between biblical and Japanese institutions and lore, especially the religious. Among these, the author points to the prominent place of ablution in connection with religious services and daily routine. Also he sees a relationship between the Japanese "torii" (a two-pillared gate erected in front of all Shinto shrines which he claims consisted in its primitive form only of two vertical pillars such as are found usually at the entrance of modern Japanese houses) and the two pillars in front of King Solomon's Temple (II Chronicles 3:17.)

He sees similarity in the construction of biblical temples and Shinto shrines in that both have an inner sanctuary reserved for the priest, and in the Judean lion crest and decoration to which he finds a counterpart in the Japanese ritu-

alistic "lion dance" as well as the decoration of some shrines by male and female stone lions or wooden lion heads despite the fact that lions are not found in Japan. He sees parallels in the ceremonial use of green branches of "sakaki" (a Japanese evergreen) and the hyssop (Leviticus 14: 4 and 7) in the use of a rope in Japanese shrines and the biblical custom of encompassing pillars with a rope (I Kings 7:15 and 23) in the white robes worn by the priests and the injunction to Shinto priests not to shave (in contrast to warriors, who in the old days of Japan used to shave the front part of the head.) Furthermore, the Japanese belief in and ceremonial use of salt as a purifying agent is said to be related to Leviticus 2:13, Judges 9: 45, II Kings 2:20, and Ezekiel 43:24.

Other references to allegedly common practices and taboos include the view of the dead body as impure and the banning of one who is "impure" from participation in community services (Numbers 6:6, 19:11-18.) Jewish mezuzoth affixed to the doorposts of a house are compared with Japanese paper charms brought home from a shrine and attached to, or placed in a wooden box above, the house entrance. Such liturgical characteristics as the use of sacred wine, the thanksgiving celebration of harvest and the sacrifice of the first fruits of the years, the carrying around of the scrolls of the Torah (which is compared with the carrying about of a portable ark or tabernacle in Shinto—this is usually carried into the sea which Oyabe thinks is in commemoration of Noah's ark). Finally the playing of sacred music by musicians placed on the east side of the altar in Shinto services and in biblical services (II Chronicles 5:12) are enumerated as further proofs of common origin. Other institutes of ritual law which are said to be parallel to the biblical ones are the Japanese custom for boys and girls aged 13 to visit a shrine on March 13 of the lunar calendar and the custom prevalent

in Japan in former days whereby a man desiring to dissolve his marriage would write a letter of divorce.

## VI

After I had read and pondered the strange revelations of Oyabe's *Origin of Japan and Japanese* I was if anything more skeptical than before. As undoubtedly many others had done before me I tended to view the entire Judaeo-Christian legend as one invented for ulterior purposes which seemed to vitiate and obliterate whatever grain of historical truth might be buried beneath. Yet, remembering that I was living in Tokyo, I decided to look up first the publisher of the book and then the author to see what more I could learn. Unfortunately, the publisher appears to have gone out of business and could not be found. The author departed from this world several years ago at the age of 75. He left a simple and philosophical will, a copy of which his family presented to me, but no other information about the sources and credibility of his unusual findings and beliefs.

After the initial excitement and the subsequent disappointment over the nature of my "discoveries" had run their course, further sober reflection brought me to the conclusion that I would be throwing out the baby with the bath-water were I to discount all I had read, heard, and seen merely because so much of it was obviously false and fantastic. The task now seemed rather to attempt to disentangle this host of obscurantist mystifications and to discover how much, if anything, was authentic in the factual material or, should all of it turn out to be pure myth, to probe into its genesis.

Thus the real challenge lies ahead. Maybe it is too much for an amateur to tackle. Yet, even such a one cannot fail to notice, as he visits the National Museum in Tokyo, that the very oldest Japanese masks on exhibit here, antedat-

ing those used in the formal court dances—in their features, the long curved noses, the unslanted eyes and their light skin color—point to other than a Mongolian origin of the prototypes. Nor can he fail to take account the fact that since olden times the Japanese ideal of female beauty appears to have centered around the whiteness of the skin, (wherefor to this day Japanese women are loath to expose their face or arms to the sun, lest they get tanned, and brides and geishas cover their face and neck with chalk-white powder.) And he will draw renewed courage for his pastime from professional observers who like himself, seemed baffled by what they saw and considered it altogether possible that "judging from the Caucasian and often Semitic physiognomy seen in the aristocratic type of Japanese, the Yamato (Japanese) were mainly of Caucasian, perhaps Iranian origin." (N. G. Munro, *Prehistoric Japan*, quoted approvingly in A. L. Sadler, *A Short History of Japan*, 1946; cf. also N. McLeod, *Epitome of the Ancient History of Japan*, whose even more far-reaching theory with some of its pictorial evidence is reported in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, New York, Vol. XII, 1905.)

Returning from Japan to the United States, I stumbled upon a first and possibly important clue in this task of "disentangling." At the suggestion of two Japanese scholars, and armed with an introduction by Professor Sonobe of Meji University I went to see the Reverend E. G. Kawamorita, a Presbyterian Minister for a Japanese-American community in San Francisco. Not only was Dr. Kawamorita fully acquainted with the researches of Oyabe and the legend of Herai but he gave me some interesting information about the background of the latter. Born in Aomori Prefecture and familiar with the whole northern part of Japan, Dr. Kawamorita, after having studied at Waseda University, in Tokyo, came to the United States where he qualified for the Ministry. He had brought

with him from his childhood days a familiarity with the strange songs, one of which is reproduced above as the song of Herai. According to Dr. Kawamorita, it is sung all over northern Honshu along with similar songs. It was the strangeness of these songs, the unintelligibility of their words, and his intellectual curiosity which, a couple of decades ago, started the Reverend on his research concerning the origin of the songs. After years of research he became convinced and established sufficient proof at least to satisfy himself, that the songs were of Hebrew origin. More specifically he found that they were Hebrew songs of exile allegedly thousands of years old. Seventeen years ago then, on a trip to his native Japan, he discussed his findings with some people there. This discussion, he suspects, may well have been the starting point of the legend of Herai which he too had never known to exist before then.

Obviously, I was not a little surprised by this sudden ray of light which, at one and the same time, seemed to lend further substance to the factual while virtually demolishing the legendary part of the story of Herai. I wanted to know more about the songs.

Indeed Dr. Kawamorita did produce in writing the complete Hebrew text as reconstrued by him, following syllable by syllable the rudimentary and distorted current version. These findings have led Dr. Kawamorita to further comparative research into the Hebrew and Japanese languages in which he professes to have discovered a far-reaching similarity. Apparently he has had some of his research published in Japanese and has engaged in a good bit of scholarly controversy about it—all in Japanese.

I do not feel qualified or entitled to present Dr. Kawamorita's findings, let alone to judge them. I hope, however, that he himself will present them to the English-reading public, and I have asked him to do so in a subsequent issue of this magazine.

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*We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights; and that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*

THOMAS JEFFERSON



Admonition

ILYA SCHOR

From Abraham J. Heschel's book *The Earth Is The Lord's*. Courtesy of Henry Schuman, Publishers.

# Selwyn S. Schwartz: Style is Conflict

By SAMUEL K. WORKMAN

SELWYN SCHWARTZ is, and has often been called, a religious poet. But the term is too simple. Schwartz's interest is in the emotional difficulty of faith. He depicts personality as unwilling to give itself to faith—truth feels high and cold—yet unable to trust any experience without it. Until faith is accepted, the personality lives in constant tension. Its inner consciousness reacts to any experience with an agonizing variety of impressions. Schwartz is acutely aware of multiple consciousness, of the resulting tension in any act of choosing, of the shifting or even blending of shapes and values which an inner desire or inner fear can inspire. That is why "religious poet," in the meaning that term has to many people, is misleadingly insufficient. Or at least it has become so with the publication of his latest volume.\*

Perhaps in all perceptive literature, multiplicity, flux and tension have always been reflected at least indirectly. But in the literature of our time, influenced by our psychologists, there has appeared a style of poetry in which those forms of experience are reflected directly. The poem is a silent monologue, and its words contain only mind's-eye images, notions and tones from the inner consciousness. As these rise up from word to word, they lack the normal usages of rational, self-controlled speech, which has learned to eliminate its secret or puzzling images. But no one in the poem steps forward to rationalize or "explain" the impressions. Like the visions in a certain depth of

dream, these words are the expression of an inner tension between desires or fears. But *what* desires, or why *those* curious words rise up to express them—these "meanings" simply are not drawn on up into everyday standard terms.

The reader, though, is like a dreamer at a lesser depth: he can both sense the images and divine their "meaning." And if he draws himself back from the stream of images, he can perhaps state their meanings in the dull, abstract words we must use for standard speech. The character of the images will suggest the character of the desires in conflict. The shifting and blending of images and of tones will indicate the immediate result of the conflict—uncertainty or tension as to what values should be placed on each desire. Yet in due course certain images will more and more frequently reappear in certain similar roles, pleasant or unpleasant, which will indicate a predominance of the values suggested by those roles.

The success of this style depends on the sensitivity and trueness with which it can enter into the state of uncertainty. The writer cannot merely clap images together at random: each shifting combination must still indicate a likely stage of one same conflict. On the other hand, he must risk clarity of "meaning" in order to create the very life and form which the uncertainty takes: that constant shifting and blending of images and of the roles they play. When the images become too fixed in meaning, a reader ceases to believe that the consciousness is multiple. The poem becomes like an allegory, where all the images and figures

\* *Horn in the Dust*. Poems. By Selwyn Schwartz. Twayne Publishers, Inc. 63 pp. \$2.00.



are absolutes—the woman on the milk-white palfrey, she's Faith, that big creature leering from a coal-black charger, he's Temptation. The dream becomes pre-arranged.

Previous to these latest poems, Schwartz had not mastered this style. An example is "Preface to Maturity," the leading lyric sequence in his last previous collection, written six or more years ago. In this poem, a figure slinks down a street filled with white snow, slips into his little apartment, and makes love to his wife in an anguish filled with clocks, doors, yellow lemons, red shoes, green trees, rain, moon, and much guilt. He knows he should not have run away from the snow, and he knows he must fear the clocks and the strong colors, even the green and the rain, but he needs the body and the love, and he never achieves full peace.

All too quickly it becomes apparent what the images "mean." Snow always means infinity, Idea and Jehovah, and it conflicts with yellow and red, which mean physical sensation, while clocks are always a reminder that anything physical is impermanent, and green, moon, even his love, are unsatisfying, wishful compromises. These and other symbols are so evident to the reader that they are scarcely images, scarcely more than code, at most allegory. There is not much left but to see what the end of the story will be:—will the man sink in sensation? will he coldly renounce it? will he resolve it through love into the Absolute? The situation is studied with much knowledge. But as a story of an introspective anguish it might have gone better in the manner of one of Kafka's skits. As verse, it can create the suddenness of the anguished man's redeisions, and of course it can flow along as the man's own consciousness, in the present tense. But the tensions of multiple consciousness are not much higher—and the consciousness not much more multiple—when the words read "all the trees are priests when the

snow covers them with a single truth" than when they read "The air is full of white mathematics" or "The snow sums up a million thoughts" or simply "The Abstraction of December."

I know I am overstating this—especially when quoting those words without the words they follow and precede—but I am impressed by the great advance in Schwartz's recent volume.

The leading poem here is an eighteen-lyric sequence called "Sermon of October." In it, the same conflict turns round and round, eluding his very grip on its causes, until, suddenly, it is resolved in the only way that could restore his certainty—an acceptance of faith. Now this same conflict is indicated, naturally enough, by many of the same images as before. The same snow, trees, colors and clocks have arisen by the end of the first two lyrics, amid words of loving and of death; and together with a few other basic images they reappear in varied extensions throughout the sequence.

But this time their "meaning" and the values felt in them are not demarked and certain from the first. The opening lyric stops after saying

we [lovers] cannot win

While the muscled ice against our thoughts

Is a dead eye's witness of everything dying:

The fowl on the table, my dear, a feast of incisions.

This is closer to romantic despair—love withered by cold force—than to religious fear. Mind, which might be the medium of infinite Idea and God, is felt as the icy instrument for recognizing finite fact and natural law—the law of death. True, the last line does reduce love to a pretty undignified operation. But that, as we first come upon it, may be irony and bitterness, not the actual feeling toward love. And as for bitterness, "feast of incisions" surely jibes also at holy days

and thus at religion, all the more bitterly because the lyric began by calling God's October "a knife vertically in your eye," which is not exactly the same as "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness." And yet, even at this early point in the whole sequence, we can see how his very bitterness reveals a capacity to reject his love as unstable. By the end of the sequence, October and winter are felt to be surer and warmer signs of God and truth than are love and the genial senses. His conflict—his "game" he now calls it—has been played out and is finished:

Once more, some ancient game  
too intricate to name, pardoned by  
green  
still evident on snow,  
plays acrobatics in a sudden, a sharp  
fall.  
What is ablaze, its most  
tempestuous blue, is praise.  
Death is wisdom, too.

Other basic images similarly blend or shift as desires or fears ascend in the man's consciousness. The eye, for instance, is basically his personal source of outward reality. But it often is felt as a window, sometimes the window of his apartment, and as such it now is loved for revealing the colored world or for dimming the awesome white light of snow, now hated for letting the world flow in, now feared for the frame and limit it imposes on infinite reality. This eye can leave his person and become a moon or a sun; as moon it can warm sensuous darkness, it can chill his love with the terrible sunlight it reflects, or it can inspire hope for the sun; and as sun it can spy and burn, it can mark time like a clock, or, finally, it can raise the cold white of snow into that blue blaze of infinite life.

At any one point where the same image reappears, its meaning is always the result of the attitude felt at that juncture by the man in whose conscious-

ness the images are supposed to be appearing. The attitude never remains the same from point to point, and at any one point before the end it is always in a tense and pained confusion. In this poem, then, the words are more than a clever code for telling a story. They themselves have the same perplexed and variable nature as the consciousness they are moving in. A reader can follow them perfectly well. But in following them he is taken into the very process which is the subject of the poem.

Drawn up into abstract thought, the process involves the relation between thought and sensation. The images, being sensation, are partly the cause of man's bafflement, the limitations of his wisdom. His mind sees more than images will embody. At the same time, as man, he necessarily lives in images and sensation, and he naturally craves them, depends on them for love and all, resents their dissolution into pure, cold-seeming "light." But as child of God—and it is here that the thought becomes more special, perhaps arbitrary—as child of God, with mind and insight, he cannot have an image which does not depend on light and which does not remind him of light. The resolution will come when he recognizes sensation itself as a form of mind, a product of infinite life, and humbly hopes to purify it.

Drawing back from the poem, a reader has only to remember the "dome of many-colored glass" or Milton's fascination with Rabbinical literature and with light, to realize that such thought is in an old tradition. To me it seems demonstrable that Schwartz has not yet brought it new life—that the actual bafflement he depicts is truer to his style than is the cause he assigns it or the resolution he makes of it. But perhaps that can be said of even the finest metaphysical poetry, in which every influence from the unconscious is quite sublimely equated with vital light and with God and eternity. And whether or not Schwartz has assumed true final

causes, he has led his images for them into an interplay that creates the illusion of so-called metaphysical experience—of consciousness confused by what it can sense only dimly and of personality in tension until it can feel sure.

Schwartz, I am told, had by more than a decade ago proved himself an effective poet in Yiddish. This is his fourth collected volume of poetry in English. Even his first drew some praise from on high, though the more circulated critics seemed mostly amused that a "religious poet" should adopt the style of e e cummings. By his second volume he had shaken all

suspicion of frivolity from his style, but it was stiff, seemingly built self-consciously by system. In this fourth collection, while there are many traces of his models, his words create experience directly. They can give pleasure in themselves to those who like to watch the sheer workings of words. Or they can disappear into the states of feeling they evoke. In his future writing, it does not seem likely Schwartz will leave the tradition of thought he has always followed. But he may well show he can depict it in ever widening areas and varying modes of the modern consciousness.



Barbed Wire

DAVID SEGEL

# The Five Dollar Bill

By RALPH FRIEDMAN

THE NIGHT I lost the five dollar bill was the blackest in my life.

The evening had started with a surprise. When my father came home my mother said to him, "Harry, it's Phil's birthday. Ten years old today. Don't you think we should have a little party?"

My father laughed bitterly. "A party? Listen to the millionaire talk. How much money do you have, Mrs. Millionaire?"

"Thirty-six cents," my mother replied. "But it wouldn't take much." She looked apprehensively at my father. He was frowning irritably. She wanted to ask him how the day went but she knew. With so many walking the streets or crowding the breadlines these hungry days in Chicago, what could be expected of junk peddlers?

He sat down and rubbed his hand heavily over his cheek. "A party," he groaned. "Do you know how hard I work for every penny?"

"Just a quarter maybe," my mother said. "It's only once a year—and we didn't give the kids anything for Christmas."

"Not a single thing," my sister echoed. She and I stood close to our mother, hoping Pa could be talked into giving me a birthday gift, though we differed on how the money should be used.

She wanted a party. If the party was big enough she would run down the street and call her girl friend, Ethel. Earlier in the year, when Ethel had become twelve, my sister's age, she had had a party at her house and invited my sister but my sister had not gone because we were as poor then as we were now

and you couldn't go to anybody's birthday party without bringing a present. All the other kids at the party would talk about it for days afterward.

I didn't want a party. For me, there was something more important. A long long time ago, even before I was nine years old and in the third grade, I had read about some great man who became successful by saving his pennies as a boy and using them to pay for his college education. I had forgotten who the man was but I wanted to be successful, I wanted to go to college and I wanted to be able to make money, not lots and lots of it but enough so that the grocery stores wouldn't stop giving us credit and the landlady wouldn't knock at the door every other day asking for at least part of the rent we owed her. "You're three months behind," she would say to my mother. "Can't you give me something? Ten dollars maybe?" And my mother would always say, "Maybe next week. My husband expects something better."

She knew my father did not expect anything better. Things were getting worse. He could hardly feed his horse and his family. Sometimes he talked about selling his horse and buying a pushcart which he would pull through the alleys, but he never did. As poor as we were my father could never see himself picking up bottles and papers from the streets instead of arguing with the housewives on the price of the junk they sold him. With the horse he was a small businessman, without it he was little more than a bum.

When I had finished college and be-



come a big man my father would have a young, fat horse instead of the old thin one he had now. He wouldn't have to peddle at all even. He would be a dealer and when he came home he would not be tired or angry and he and my mother would not holler at each other if my mother bought a loaf of fresh bread instead of stale bread and my sister would not cry anymore, like she did whenever my parents fought. My mother would always be able to pay the rent and the grocer would never say to her, "I'm sorry but I can't give you any more credit," and she would not have to sew every piece of clothing a dozen times. When something ripped or wasn't a good fit anymore she would give it to people who were just as we had been, but she would never say, as our relatives said when they gave my mother a dress, "It makes us so sad to see you dressed this way." My mother would say: "Pardon me. I know you have lots of clothes but our closet is just busting and please, will you take this? Maybe you know somebody who can use it." Or she would leave it at their door when they were asleep and they would never know who brought it. But she would never make anybody feel bad about being poor.

My sister, who liked to read, would have a big room full of books. She could stay home all day and read and when she had finished those books I would buy her more. And when she married and had kids they would get all kinds of wonderful presents on holidays and on their birthdays, just the way it happened in the movies. And on July fourth they would get money to buy firecrackers but they mustn't buy any that would hurt anybody. They could have a nickle for an ice cream cone on a hot summer day without first having to cry for it and when it was real hot they would be taken to the beach and have a picnic lunch. The bread would be fresh and the sandwiches wouldn't all be baloney or peanut butter. There would be big slices of salami and

American cheese between the bread and bottles of soda pop to wash the food down.

I made up my mind I had to go to college after I read the success story of the great man. So I started selling papers at night. Every night, for at least three hours, I sold the Tribune and the Herald-Examiner, hollering my head off, making every restaurant and pool hall, climbing the stairs to the second floor cafes and the card parlors, racing and fighting the other newsboys to make a sale. "Nothing stood in the way of his determination," I had read in the story of the great man and nothing, not the other newsies or the police or the train or the snow was going to block my determination.

My father soon found out that I was making money and forced me to give him my earnings. But I fooled him: sometimes I held back a penny or a nickle and put it in a tin can which I hid on the top shelf of the clothes closet. No one knew what I was doing; it was my secret. When the proper time came I would tell them I was going to college. They would laugh at me and ask what I was going to use for money and then I would show them. I had everything planned.

I was wishing my father would give me a quarter for my birthday so I could add it to my savings when my sister said, speaking of what we hadn't received for Christmas, "Not a thing."

At this my father pounded both hands on his thighs and stormed, "Is it my fault? Do I drink my money away? Do I buy myself fancy suits?"

"Not even a little party?" my sister asked timidly.

My father quickly drew back his hand as though to strike her. "Shut up!" he yelled. "Shut up, shut up!"

"Harry, please!" my mother begged.

"You too shut up!" he hissed. "Do you know how many alleys I have to go through to make a quarter? Do you know sometimes all day I don't make more than a quarter? Do you know how

many times I have to holler 'Rags-a-line, Rags-a-line' to make a quarter? God, if I had a penny every time I hollered we would never have another worry." His head dropped. "This life," he moaned.

My sister and I backed away embarrassedly.

"Harry," my mother said after a while, "wash up and we'll eat." He arose without a word and went into the bathroom.

At the supper table my father brightened. "So it's your birthday," he said to me. "Ten years old, huh? Lucky boy. When I was ten I was making shoes in the old country. Twelve hours a day, six days a week I worked. But you go to school, you have more schooling than I had in my whole life. Yes, America is good."

"Very good," my mother mocked.

My father reproached her. "Is it America's fault that I'm too dumb to be anything but a junk peddler? Is it America's fault I haven't brains to make a living? Look at all the immigrants who have become rich."

"And those who are still poor," my mother said bitterly.

My father made a disapproving gesture of his hand. "People who talk like you never get any place."

"And you are somewhere?" my mother asked sarcastically.

"No," he answered, "but our children will be somebodies. You'll see. America will be good for them because they are smart enough to make something of themselves." He looked at my sister and me. "We make a party for Phil's birthday," he announced.

"Tonight?" my sister asked.

"Now," said my father.

"Then I'll go right now for Ethel," and my sister was out of her chair and had started to the clothes closet for her coat.

My father was taken by surprise but not for long. "Come back," he ordered. "No Ethel. Just the family."

"But a party," my sister protested.

"On fifteen cents?"

"Is that all?" I asked, lifting my voice.

"That's all! Fifteen cents."

My sister walked slowly back to the table.

My father reached into his pocket and drew out his billfold. From it he took a five dollar bill. "Here," he said, "go to the bakery and get fifteen cents sweet rolls."

"Haven't you anything smaller?" my mother asked.

"Just two cents," he answered. "I need change for tomorrow."

I put on my jacket and left the house. I ran to the bakery. I always ran. Wherever I went I ran. I would run until I was out of breath and then I would walk until I had enough breath to run again. Running fast I would forget the landlady and her rent, the grocers who cut off credit, the fights my mother and father had, the patched clothes I wore and the things I couldn't buy, like ice cream cones and candy. Running fast, weaving between the people on the street, I was already in college, the star half-back, cutting through a broken field on my way to a touchdown.

I was out of breath when I reached the bakery. Inside, I was impatient, anxious for the other customers to be served so I could be waited on and start running for home. Everything smelled so nice! I could see the sweet rolls I wanted. They looked so fresh in the window, their icing gleaming under the electric lights. It had been so long since we had sweet rolls!

When all the other customers were gone Mrs. Kane, who owned the bakery, asked me what I wanted. I pointed to a tray in the window and said, "Fifteen cents worth."

She put a dozen in a bag and I started to pay her. But I couldn't. The money wasn't in the pocket where I thought I put it. I searched my other pockets. I went through each of them three times. I turned them inside out.

Mrs. Kane was watching me. I hated her for it, this cold, cruel person so sure of herself, standing there, not saying a word, her hands at her side, looking at me like I was putting on a show. Did she think I was a faker? Did she know what had happened? What was she thinking about, staring at me, her eyes never leaving me?"

"I musta left it home," I blurted out. "I'll be back." I rushed out and past the bakery window so she could not see me if she kept looking.

I walked back the way I had run. I knew I would never find the five dollars and I knew I would find it and would forget about having lost it and I knew that I knew nothing because a hundred crazy ideas mixed in my head, like gravel in a cement mixer.

Where could I look, where would it be? The wind of February was blowing hard and cold, in all directions, and the scraps of paper on the ground skipped ahead of it like kids hurrying to school on a frosty morning.

In the darkness, what could I see? The feeble rays that fell under the lamppost were too weak to crawl away from it. Between the stores on the block there were small puddles of sick yellow light and farther away a layer of brownness covered the dirt between the sidewalk and the streets, like a thin coat of ice.

I picked up a hundred scraps of paper. Some of them I chased half a block. I went back and forth, back and forth, searching every hole, every crack, feeling in the corners of the dark hallways, running my hands through the gutters.

As I was on my hands and knees in front of a parked car, peering under it, a stream of light poured in at my side. I turned my head and saw a man with a flashlight. I was surprised and drew back but he asked in a friendly voice, "Lookin' fer somethin', kid?"

"A five dollar bill," I said.

He whistled. "Didn' know there was that much money left. Whereja lose it?"

I told him what had happened: how I had started from the house to the bakery to buy some sweet rolls and how along the way the money must have dropped out.

"Well," he sighed, "my wife's waitin' fer me but you're in trouble, ain'cha?"

"Oh I am," I said hastily, not wanting him to leave me. "I am, I am."

"O.K.," he said. "We'll start from the bak'ry an' trace your steps. Lucky our halllight is out so I got my flashlight."

We looked all the way home on the sidewalk and then back to the bakery we looked in the gutters. Finally, he said: "I'm sorry, kid. I wasn' much help. I s'pose it'll be tough on you."

"Yes," I muttered, feeling lonelier than before now that he was going.

He pushed the brim of his hat up. "Too bad. I wish I had a five to give you but I wish I had five for myself, too—so where does wishes get you?"

"Thanks," I muttered. "Thanks very much."

He shrugged his shoulders. "Forget it. I'm just sorry we couldn' find it."

I did not reply. I was beginning to think about facing my father.

"What you gonna do now?" the man asked.

"Look again," I answered.

"Again?"

"Once more. It's gotta be someplace."

"Well, here's hopin' fer you. My wife'll think I'm lost. Good luck, kid."

I started back to the house, dreading what awaited me. How could I explain? Could I say somebody robbed me? My father wouldn't believe me. Could I hide somewhere until morning? Where? Where in the wintertime? I did not know what was going to happen but I had seen my father angry before and I had been beaten before but nothing was as bad as what would happen now: this was the end.

Now I was no longer an All American. I hated college and football and the success stories of great men. Now I was

moaning, Please God, God, let me find the money, and I was bent over, scratching into every corner, every crack, crawling under every car, dirtying my clothes, wetting them from the frozen earth and the frost on the street, chasing every piece of paper that ran from me, looking back with its head over its shoulder and dodging just as I reached for it.

When I came to the street I had to cross I whimpered, Please God, hit me with a truck, break my leg, take me to a hospital. In the hospital I would be protected and my father might feel sorry for me; when I came out he might not hit me. Maybe by then everything would be different; maybe, even, I could save all my money.

I kept my head down when I crossed the street but I was not hit and before I knew it I was at the house, ringing the bell, and my mother was answering the door and I was inside and my mother was asking: "What took you so long? Where have you been? Where are the rolls?" and my sister was saying, "How dirty you are!"

"I musta left the money here," I said, trying to hold back my fear. "I saw you put it in your pocket," my mother replied. "No," I insisted, "I couldn't have. It's not there."

My father came up to me and asked suspiciously. "What did you do with it?" "I think I left it here," I stammered.

"No," he shouted angrily, "you didn't! You didn't, damn you! What did you do with the money?"

He grabbed the collar of my jacket and shook me hard. "Say what you did with it, damn it! Say or I'll break your neck!"

"Harry!" My mother pushed him away. "Maybe he has it in his pockets."

I knew it was useless but she went through all my pockets, looked through every bit of clothing I wore. Then she said quietly, "You lost it."

"I looked all over," I whined. "Everyplace. Honest."

My father stomped away. He returned wearing his mackinaw. He took my hand, squeezing it so tightly that it hurt and dragged me to the door. "Where are you taking him?" my mother asked, alarmed by the storm brewing in his eyes.

"To the bakery!" he snarled.

He did not take his hand off me: I had to run to keep up with his long steps. He strode furiously, silently, so silent I could feel his fury more than I had ever felt it. I had never seen him silent when he was mad and I was afraid, shivering with fear from this fury that was too terrible for speech.

When we reached the bakery he spun me inside, using such force that I was knocked against the counter.

"Did you see this boy tonight?" he asked Mrs. Kane.

"Yes," she said blankly.

"Did he have money with him—a five dollar bill?"

"No. He thought he did. Here's the rolls. You want them?"

My father turned on me. "You want them?" he asked threateningly through gritted teeth.

"No!" I cried. I rushed past him and out of the bakery, running for home as swiftly as I could, reaching it gasping and tearful.

"What you did," my mother said sadly, her face white and thin, "what you did."

"How did it happen, Phil?" my sister asked. "Are you sure you searched good?"

"Shut up!" my mother snapped curtly. "God only knows what will happen now."

When the bell rang my teeth started chattering. "Dear God," I begged, "Dear God Dear God Dear God . . ." I was shaking and weeping silently. Now there was no beginning and no ending and nothing nothing nothing but something terrible, nothing nothing nothing but how I wanted to die, to run away, to wake up from this horrible dream, nothing now but the terrible thing coming.

My father did not say anything but my



mother put herself in his path. He shoved her away and lunged at me. I dodged his grasp, dashed into the bathroom and bolted the door.

I could hear his mackinaw fall to the floor and his short, heavy breathing as he came to the bathroom and then the crashing thunder of his fists as he beat on the door and the uncontrollable roar of his voice. "Come out, you robber of my purse! Come out, you half-wit, you lunatic! Come out, come out!" and he shouted every dirty name I had ever heard.

My mother pleaded with him. "Harry, please; please, Harry. The neighbors—"

—"Tell them!" he bellowed. "Tell them what kind of son you have! Tell them who you have for a child!"

He threw himself at the door, pounding at it, turning the knob violently. "Leave me in!" he demanded. "Open up and leave me in!"

It had always been cold in the bathroom in the wintertime but now I was sweating; I was chilly and shivering but I was sweating. "Dear God," I begged, "stop it, stop it. Dear God, Dear God . . ."

I heard my sister say, beneath my father's roaring, "Please Pa, it could happen to anybody" and then the lashing sound of flesh against flesh and the scream of my sister and the high-pitched protests of my mother.

For a moment my father stopped trying to break the door down. He bawled at my mother: "I'll kill him for what he did, I'll kill him!"

"Have a heart," my mother begged.

"Have a heart? Who has a heart for me? If I don't feed the horse, does he have a heart for me? Does anybody give me a bag of rags for nothing? Does the dealer have a heart for me? Do you eat with a heart? Money you need, damn it! Money is the boss! Money is the king! Without money you're a piece of dirt under somebody's feet. Money you need—and he took my last penny!"

With an animal-like howl he hurled

himself at the door again, shrieking now, howling sounds that did not make words, drumming at the door with heavy beats of his big hands.

I shook and sweated and could not think. Then I could stand it no longer. I put my head out of the window and tried to get through but it was too small even for me. I opened the medicine cabinet but there was nothing in it except cotton and castor oil. I sat on the edge of the bathtub again, unable to make any sound but the gasping of prayers I could hear with my throat. I had never thought I could be that still. I stared at the doorknob, wondering when the lock would be broken. And each blow on the door smashed at my heart until I was certain it had stopped.

I do not remember how long my father tried to break through, how long he cursed and threatened and made those animal-like noises I had never heard before. Perhaps it was an hour; maybe two hours. In the bathroom there was no such thing as minutes and hours; time had come to a violent end. There was only the white door and somebody trying to knock it down to get at me.

"Let me in!" he ordered. "Let me in, robber, murderer! You took my job away, my life away!"

"For God's sake, Harry," my mother pleaded. "Stop it, stop it! It's not the end of the world."

"No?" he hollered. "No? What will I use for money?"

"Take my thirty-six cents," she offered. "Just leave him alone."

When she said that I remembered the money I was saving for college. I tried to make my voice loud but it trembled thinly as it came through my mouth and seeped through the door, "I have some money."

"You!" my father exclaimed. "Where?"  
"On the shelf in the closet—back near the wall."

There was a pause. My mother said, "I'll see."

My father hissed at me: "I'll kill you if you are lying."

My mother returned and said, "Here it is." I heard the coins being dumped on the table. After a while my mother announced the sum: "Four dollars and a nickle."

"All right," my father growled. "He still took a dollar from me but now I have something to start on."

"Can he come out now?" my mother asked.

My father must have nodded because my mother came to the door and called, "Come on, Phil. It's all right now."

I don't know how I ever opened the door. My hands were shaking so I could hardly keep them on the knob long enough and it took all my strength to turn it.

Then the lock was released and my mother came in and I fell to the floor, sobbing and screaming, crying until my throat was choked and I was struggling for breath. Even when that happened I did not stop crying or shaking for a long time.

I remember my mother and sister bending over me until I could stand up and

I remember my father taunting me about being such a wonderful son, such a credit to him, so reliable, but by then I could cry no longer and I was too weak to be frightened anymore.

The next night I went back to selling papers and kept it up for several years, until I found a better job. But I did not save again for college until I had left home—years later. And though I took many beatings and passed through many dark hours, some of them in the army, I was never again as afraid nor after that did I ever cry.



# *Jewish Poets in America*

By CHARLES I. GLICKSBERG

A NUMBER of Jewish poets have made a genuinely important contribution to American literature; it is a mistake, however, to assume that they fall into a recognizable racial or religious pattern. To suppose that American Jews writing English poetry create something distinctively different from the work of other American poets is to be guilty of sloppy wishful thinking or preconceived anti-Semitic bias, even when it is unconscious in origin. The cultured anti-Semite insists that the Jew is an undesirable influence, an interloper and an alien, incurably so, forever cut off from the native heritage of Anglo-American culture. Whatever he turns out is bound to be tainted at the source with the insidious and corrupt spirit of "Jewishness." On the other hand, the militant glorifiers of all things Jewish, running to the other extreme, are guilty of more or less the same offense. Convinced that there is a specific and unique Jewish essence, they search for the racial or religious or cultural components peculiar to every creative work produced by a Jew, and they invariably find it. That is precisely the trouble. No matter what the underlying motive may be, such a hunt for a Jewish essence helps to fertilize the seed-bed of prejudice, for it alienates the Jewish poet and sets him off as a creature apart. Fortunately Jewish poets in this land have not suffered the fate of cultural alienation that has been visited so cruelly upon the Negro. No one, except possibly a thesis-monger or a crank, would make a specialty of dividing American poets according to religious denominations: Protes-

tants, Jews, Catholics, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Christian Scientists, Quakers, Unitarians, Methodists, Episcopalians, or what not. Americans all, each poet makes his creative offering to the land of his birth or adoption, and if he writes in the native tongue he is accepted as an American poet, not segregated according to sectarian categories.

Nothing illustrates more strikingly the semantic danger of generalizing about Jewish genius than the kind of poetry Jewish poets have actually published in America. If one did not know that they were Jewish by descent, there would, in many cases, be no positive way of identifying them as such. They are Americans, native sons, to the tradition born, responding to the cultural pressures of their age and environment; and they are also individual men, suffering from personal problems, unreleased passions, unachieved aspirations, unresolved tensions and enigmas, burdened with ineffable metaphysical nostalgias, seeking some sort of answer to the eternal question mark posed by the cosmos. There is no common denominator, racial or religious, cultural or characterological, to which these poets can be reduced. What has Kenneth Fearing, an embattled Marxist, in common with James Oppenheim, a mystic profoundly influenced by Jung? What is the bond between the facile and fanciful Maxwell Bodenheim and the Marxist-messianic Isidor Schneider? What is the precise relationship between the democratic collectivism, the vision of a spiritually united humanity, as voiced by Norman Rosten and the introversion,

Eliotic and indefinably complex, of a Delmore Schwartz? Jewish poets use the very themes, in all their spacious variety and challenging universality, that poets from the beginning of time have written about: the brevity and precariousness of life, the sting of sorrow, the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, the call of beauty, the rapture and star-crossed vicissitudes of love, the degrading evils and galling injustices of social life, the hunger of the spirit, the inevitability of death.

The wisest conclusion to draw is that in the realm of poetry racial or religious labels have no aesthetic sanction or validity. The poem is the final test, the thing that counts supremely. Each poet expresses the fullness of his temperament, forges his own characteristic style, writing about the experiences which matter most to him. There is the flamboyant wit and incisive social satire of Louis Untermeyer and there is the lyrical emphasis on beauty and love in the poems of Charles A. Wagner. Some write about the bitterness and beauty of life in the East Side Ghetto of New York: Alter Brody and Helen Wolfert; one might mention, finally, the emergence of perhaps the most striking individual talent in contemporary American poetry, that of Karl J. Shapiro.

James Oppenheim, son of Minnesota Jewish parents, had to struggle from early boyhood against severe economic handicaps, to drudge for a livelihood when his soul cried out for the life of the creative spirit. From November, 1916 to October, 1917 he edited the *Seven Arts*, which proclaimed his faith that America was flowering into national self-consciousness and would soon witness a creative renaissance. A poet of plangent sincerity, James Oppenheim wrote with the impassioned fervor of the ancient Hebrew prophets; his chants, confessional and nakedly introspective, are instinct with the force of moral passion and express a profound need for spiritual purification

and transcendence. He is the intoxicated God-seeker, feverishly in pursuit of salvation. Oppenheim's imagination, in *Songs for the New Age* (1914), voices the cravings and eternal conflicts of the human heart: the sins and secrets of the soul, the hot lusts of the flesh, the poisonous effects of repression. Each lyric is an effort at self-understanding, another stage in the never-ending struggle to achieve full spiritual integrity, wholeness and health. The spirit of man is divine; hence man must worship no false gods but search deep within for the essential self that is God. With intense compassion Oppenheim identifies himself with the weak and the poor, the scorned and rejected of life, finding in them, too, the meaning and beauty of life. That is the heart of his faith: the only true way of finding your brother is to find yourself first, for within us are contained all the potentialities of the race.

If Oppenheim is mystically exalted, Louis Untermeyer, by comparison, seems to lack depth, complexity, passionate intensity. He is a poet of grace and skill, evincing occasional flashes of authentic power. Though the range of subject matter is not wide, his work is solid and substantial enough. More impressive on the whole as a satirist than as a serious, social-minded poet, he can strike a piercing note of social protest in a poem like "Caliban in the Coal Mines." He succeeds most happily as a disciple of Heine (whose poetry he has translated into English), brilliantly satirizing the follies of his age. Fundamentally, his satires strike home because they spring from a social philosophy that is liberal in its sympathies, progressive in outlook. He sides with the underdogs, the disinherited and oppressed and wretched of the earth. Untermeyer is not only admirable and indefatigable anthologist and critic but also a humorist, a master of deft, witty verses. He cleverly parodies the stylistic and idiosyncrasies of the poets of his time. All in all, he has published nine



books of verse; the best of his work is to be found in *The Selected Poems and Parodies of Louis Untermeyer* (1935). In this collection he has preserved the poems most likely to endure. What identifies his poetry is its impassioned quest for beauty, in Nature and man. This search for beauty is rendered poignant by being tied up with an intimate perception of the injustices of social life as well as the unfulfillments and tragic waste of the personal life. Like Oppenheim, he is filled with the righteous wrath of the prophets of old when he beholds the way in which men are exploited, the fruits of their labor taken away from them, the squalor and sordidness of the slums, the brutalizing ugliness of poverty, but he keeps undimmed his faith in the future of the race.

Our next poet, Maxwell Bodenheim, has been writing for a good many years, but he is still virtually the same Bodenheim: Bohemian, eccentric, volubly assertive, betraying little change of mood or of mind, though he was for a time strongly attracted to the Marxist evangel. A lyricist in a minor key, a troubador of second-rate emotions, an ingenious embroiderer of lavish tropes and purple patches, he has never enjoyed a wide audience. The keynote of his verses, which pour forth in a copious stram, is struck in *Advice* (1920), in which he gives advice to a street pavement, a buttercup, a river steam-boat, a pool, a butterfly, a forest, a horned toad. He composes quaint, titillating little pieces, decorations on china cups, delicate lace work. When he seizes upon a weighty, socially vital subject he is lost. Occasionally, however, he can fashion a lyric of loveliness and sensuous grace. Essentially Bodenheim is a master of artifice. Life is a series of painted tapestries blown by the wind, a kaleidoscope, a carnival in which he is the central, fascinated spectator. He sees life in all its false glamor and rich absurdity.

He toys with his themes, as in the fantastic lyrics of *The King of Spain* (1928), penning obscure glittering conceits, metaphorical ambiguities, verbal fancies. His strength is his undoing. He is so copious and facile that his imagination runs away with him. He writes from the outside looking in, watching with prodigious amusement the antics of people who are not aware of the final irony that ends their journey and plunges them suddenly into the cold oblivion of dust. He communicates a metaphysical irony that is unresolved and uncompassionate, perceiving the vanity and futility of life. Added to this is an extraordinary power of fantasy, of viewing the world through violently contrasted and disordered perspectives. In his foreword to *The Sardonic Arm*, he tells how he depends on the ineffable ambiguities resident in words to produce his subtle poetic effects. His emotions stem from his mind, not the heart. His overindulgence in rhetoric stems from a fundamental lack of intellectual vision: he is philosophically vague, naive, and undisciplined. But he does possess a remarkable mimetic gift, which he uses, as in *Bringing Jazz* (1930), to suggest the syncopated character of "jazz poetry" and the romance and sordid tragedies of the slums.

Then there are some Jewish poets who openly espouse the Communist cause and march forward under the banner of revolution. *Comrade: Mister*, by Isidor Schneider, a novelist and critic as well as poet, is a typical example of the Marxist upsurge in American poetry. After his conversion to Communism, Schneider single-mindedly dedicated himself to the ideal of establishing the proletarian dictatorship. He draws lavish, revenge-nurtured phantasies of the heroic workers going through the land, liquidating the capitalist vermin and making a clean job of everything in order to prepare for the coming of the Messiah in the shape of a Commissar. What his verse amounts to

—it is not poetry but editorialized and sentimentalized propaganda—is an elaborate dream-symbolism controlled by the Marxist canons of orthodox doctrine. The masses are portrayed as the saviors of society; the rich are vicious, depraved, evil, worthy of extermination. Individualism—that is the cancer eating at the heart of capitalism, which is now in the process of disintegration.

Another Jewish poet with left-wing sympathies is Muriel Rukeyser, whose volumes of verse attest to a rich and vigorous talent. Her first volume, *Theory of Flight*, published when she was twenty-one, betrays her early interest in themes of social protest. *A Turning Wind*, though more obscure in expression, is more ambitious in scope, dealing as it does with a current social problem. It utilizes the "documentary method," which is developed to its highest potential in *U. S. 1*, especially in the long poem, "The Book of the Dead," which narrates in terse, stinging lines the story of miners who contracted silicosis in the mines.

Without question the most talented and versatile Marxist poet of the thirties is Kenneth Fearing. His book, *Poems*, is in the revolutionary vein, though without the dialectical skulduggery and ghoulish seriousness that are to be found in so much so-called "proletarian poetry" of the decade of depression. When he tackles the political problem, he sounds a bitter and barbaric yawp of humor. Yet he often mistakes vehemence for creative passion, the shining tinsel of rhetoric for the pure gold of poetry. Conditions in capitalist society excite his violent indignation as well as heartfelt compassion. He catalogues, in madcap, colloquial, virile, slangy lines, the hideous aspects of our industrial civilization, documenting the tragic history of the years of depression, the people driven mad with misery and hunger and unemployment, the evictions of the poor, the suicides in the subways.

*Collected Poems* reveals the vertiginous tempo of our age, its destructive manias, its collective psychosis of fear and greed. Everyone is stricken with the anguish of anxiety, the fear of impending disaster, and no avenue of escape lies open. Contemporary life is without dignity or decency, without motive or meaning. These are the lyrical indictments Fearing composes as he exposes the horror and madness of the world we live in, a world without laughter or the fulfillment of love, without the benediction of hope or faith in the future. The only thing that sustains the poet is the vision of an ideal, collectivized society which the workers will someday build with their hands.

When the Soviet Union, like the United States, finally became involved in the Second World War, a number of American poets became not only ultra-patriotic but also ultra-democratic in their espousal of the cause of the United Nations. Joy Davidman, a former Communist who in 1946 decided to leave the Party, edited *War Poems of the United Nations* in 1943. She brought to her work ardently political instead of aesthetic criteria as the basis of value. The poems she assembled are all intended to serve as ideological ammunition in the war against Fascism. The symbolism of revolutionary poetry, however, is most effective when it is least explicit and hortatory. It must work by indirection, rather than attempt to capture the mind of the reader by direct propagandistic assault. Apart from the volumes edited by Oscar Williams, an original poet in his own right as well as a discriminating and enterprising anthologist, the period of the war produced little poetry of genuine aesthetic significance and worth.

As we glance back appraisingly over the past decades, nothing is more impressive than the degree to which Jewish poets, with the possible exception of "the comrades" from Union Square, have

identified themselves with the United States, its democratic ideals and traditions, assimilating the maternal milk of its culture and mastering its native idiom. Karl Shapiro has published some volumes of beautifully chiseled verse expressive of an integrated personality and a rare, commanding talent. Though he is primarily concerned with universal themes he also writes poems instinct with indignation at social injustice, social prejudice and snobbery. There is the unforgettable, excoriating opening of the pointed satire, "University:"

"To hurt the Negro and avoid  
the Jew  
Is the curriculum."

*Essay on Rime* is a more successful venture than *V-Letter* or *Person, Place, and Thing*. It is not only an evaluation of modern poetry in its three major aspects: language, prosody, and belief; it is also the revelation of a personality that is attempting to find itself and affirm its own firm-centered values. The most serious damage to poetry, as Shapiro points out, was done by the contemporary bankruptcy of faith. This failure of belief gave birth to the desperate and abortive myth that art is the supreme criterion of experience, that poetry is a substitute for salvation. Since the poet is essentially a believer, the modern poets are neurotically tormented by the late death of the gods. There-in is the terrible crisis that now confronts poetry. Shapiro exposes the abysmal folly of embracing Marxism or turning to Freudianism as a way out of the present spiritual impasse. He shows how spurious are the deductions drawn from psychoanalytic theory, and how equally untenable is the attempt to convert literature into a revolutionary mode of action. Modern poetry has reached a dead-end, but the appearance of this volume and his recent book, *The Trial of a Poet*, give promise of a revival of poetry, of a return to a more serious, more profound, and more truly inspired art.

A young poet of indubitable talent and high promise is Norman Rosten, whose first book, *Return Traveler, Again*, published by the Yale University Press, reveals his chief preoccupations as a poet and the major influences impinging on his work. These sketches and satires are explorations of America, what it was, what it became, what it might have been, and what it might still be if young men of vision and courage will that it be so. It is a fresh and heartening, though at times bitter, report of experience, but it is thoroughly rooted in the legends and traditions, the ideals and achievements of this country from the day of its first discovery. Rosten has also published *The Fourth Decade and Other Poems* and *The Big Road*. The latter volume is his most ambitious bid for poetic fame. In this long documentary narrative there are no heroes, except the land, the elements of Nature against which man bravely contends, history which he bravely shapes, and the burden of the past which he carries along with him. The *dramatis personae* consist of the anonymous masses who pushed against great odds into the unknown and endured untold hardships, either triumphing or perishing in the elemental struggle, but the epic quest—the building of roads, symbol of the conquest of the wilderness and the sea by civilization—goes steadily ahead. This is the imaginative vision that pervades the poem, which is replete with maps, statistics, technical scientific details, and powerful staccato lines. It is a magnificent saga of road building through the ages. The fifth part, concerned with the building of the Alcan Highway, constitutes the best section of the poem, driving home the significance of this dangerous, back-breaking labor, the road that man constructs, the presentness of the past and the immanence of the future. Whether they know it or not, men are moving toward union with their kind. All those who dreamt of passage and sought to anticipate the birth of the

future, find fulfilment in these roads that symbolically as well as literally unify the world.

Jewish poets in America, however much they may differ in mood and temperament, talent and insight, are strikingly united on the whole by their attitude toward the world, their passionate response to the challenge of experience, their prophetic vision of a better world and a spiritually redeemed mankind. That, to be sure, is not the only note they strike, for they are Americans as well as Jews, individuals as well as members of an historically conditioned cultural group. But this general pattern of impassioned earnestness, this sense of responsibility for the miseries and misfortunes of the world, is not to be mistaken. They see life steadily and honestly, even if they do not always see it whole. They are vitally concerned about the integrity of the individual as well as the health and welfare of society. Though a few have preached Communist doctrine, the Jewish poets have for the most part been true to themselves and to their consecrated mission on earth: to sing to men in such a prophetic strain that they will throw off the shackles of convention and eman-

cipate the God within. As James Oppenheim cries out: "For the only sin is death, and the only virtue to be altogether alive and your own authentic self." These Jewish poets are free spirits, the true apostles of that sweetness and light which Matthew Arnold hailed as the proper function of culture: "culture which believes in making reason and the will of God prevail, believes in perfection, in the steady pursuit of perfection." Or as Freud expressed it with pregnant compactness: "Where id was, there shall ego be."

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*The World must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundation of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when these rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.*

WOODROW WILSON—

Address to Congress April 2, 1917  
(State of War with Germany)





# Report from Jerusalem

By GEOFFREY B. WIGODER

THE PROBLEM of religious education in the camps has been to the fore throughout the winter and at one time threatened to break up the government coalition. It derives from the Israel system of education by party which necessitates four school systems each controlled by a different shade of political thinking—the general system, the workers' schools, the orthodox schools and the ultra-orthodox schools. The tragic corollary of this is the deep indoctrination of party politics from the earliest ages and the undignified scramble to get children, especially in the immigrant camps. Some voices are calling for a unified system—but doctrinaire differences are so firmly impressed that it would be hard, if not impossible, to find sufficient common ground.

Part of this is itself only the vestibule to the wider question of the position of religion in the State of Israel. The government at present consists of an uneasy coalition including the Socialists (Mapai) the orthodox bloc and a number of smaller parties. The coalition has maintained itself through the realization of the necessity of a strong internal government and by a tacit understanding not to air problems which may potentially cause friction with the orthodox. This has even led to a strong government move to postpone indefinitely the formulation of any fixed constitution, which would necessarily have to decide on some of the basic internal differences which at present are being glossed over.

No one is really happy with the present position—but the country is ringed

with enemies waiting to pounce on any internal instability. Mapai recently initiated negotiations with the United Workers' Party (Mapam) and had they been successful a complete left-wing government may have been formed, excluding in all probability the orthodox bloc. However it turned out that although Mapai and Mapam co-operate in the powerful Trade Union Histadrut, they found they could not co-operate in a government. One of the basic reasons for this was Mapam's Marxist orientation which makes it favour a more pro-socialist home policy and a more pro-Russian foreign policy than Mapai is prepared to adopt. Mr. Ben-Gurion, with his remarkable grasp of the realities of a situation, fully sees that Israel is far from being ripe for any further doses of socialization within; and will for some time at least be largely dependent on foreign (and particularly American) capital from without.

So, the present coalition continues and the crucial question of the official relation of Judaism to the State remains seething below the surface . . . and the traditional formulae of marriage, *get*, *aguna* and *halitza* are incorporated in the official laws of the land. Women, who fought in the front line, ploughed the lands and became Cabinet Ministers by the side of the men of Israel, have no legal right to divorce their husbands, to remarry if the death of their husband cannot be proved and so on. But they have a vote—and if some of the present anomalies are not removed, their vote will play a decisive role in the 'kultur-kampf.'

Broadcasting in Israel is still in its infancy. During the days of the Mandate, the British-run Palestine Broadcasting Service ran programs in all three official languages (English, Hebrew and Arabic). Their main competition came from the outlawed 'Voice of Israel' broadcasting from a secret transmitter.

With the establishment of the state, the British personnel disappeared and the 'Voice of Israel' achieved official status. During the early days when Jerusalem was besieged, it split into the 'Voice of Israel' from Tel-Aviv and the 'Voice of Jerusalem' from the beleaguered capital. In the early stages there was hand-to-hand fighting in the Jerusalem broadcasting station and programs were transmitted from the Post Office.

Recently the old studios—rebuilt into the most elaborate broadcasting station in the Middle East—have come back into service. The Tel-Aviv studios are seldom used and most of the staff has returned to Jerusalem. A single program is put out and only for a short time each day are there separate programs from Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv.

Broadcasting begins at 6:30 a.m. with the morning's gymnastics and closes down in the evening at 11:15 (with breaks between 8:15 and 10 a.m. and 3:15-4 p.m. to conserve electricity). Most of the programs are in Hebrew but there are three Arabic transmissions each day as well as two news-bulletins in English and one in French. The staple diet is music, mostly on gramophone records with serious music predominating; dance music is seldom heard except the folk-dance variety. Every night there is a reading from the bible with a short commentary and twice a week there are Talmud lessons. Dramatic features are infrequent and somewhat crude—however plans are under way to improve and increase them and to overcome the technical deficiencies and lack of proper equipment which hamper their immediate improvement. Kol Israel is run by the

government and follows the European tradition of no commercials. It suffers from a preponderance of talks and records but is making a serious effort to improve and to overcome the lethargy which is the pitfall of a radio monopoly.

The technical facilities of the internal broadcasting system are used late at night by the recently instituted 'Broadcasts to the Diaspora' of the World Zionist Organization. These are carried on a wavelength of 33.3 metres (or 9,000 kilocycles) and are being clearly picked up throughout Europe and North Africa and occasionally also along the Eastern seaboard of the United States. Later this year a new fifty kilowatt transmitter is due to be completed which should cover all the United States.

At present these broadcasts are confined to Yiddish, French and English—45 minutes of each daily. Each language starts with a fifteen minute newsreel followed by a fifteen minute program of Israel music. The last quarter of an hour is generally devoted to a feature such as Hebrew lessons, quizzes, plays and talks. Special Sabbath programs are broadcast on Fridays and Saturdays.

It is still too early to estimate the extent of the listening audience but letters that have been received from Europe—both sides of the Iron Curtain—as well as North Africa indicate that these broadcasts have captured the interest of both Jews and non-Jews who listen regularly. This is particularly true of isolated Jewish families who have now in their own homes a direct link with the wider Jewish world. Much of all this is still in an experimental stage but the beginning has been auspicious.

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Another successful experiment was recently concluded in Jerusalem. This consisted of an intensive course in Hebrew to new immigrants who lived together and studied all day and every day for

five months. The result was so successful that a second course of this nature is now in progress.

Out of over six hundred applicants, a hundred and thirty were chosen, mostly people with a professional background. They were taken from the immigrant camps and the kibbutzim and the only language in common was the Hebrew they gradually picked up together. The course was arranged by the Absorption of Immigrants Department of the Jewish Agency in conjunction with the Government's Department of Culture in the Ministry of Education. Most of the participants are housed and fed under a single roof, thereby eliminating the maximum degree of distraction and permitting the utmost concentration on the immediate task of learning Hebrew. Of the 120 graduates of the first course, all are now working fluently in the language—in medicine, in law and in the arts; one is an actress on the Hebrew stage while three of the graduates are now themselves Hebrew teachers.

In the second group, currently being trained, there are 315 participants divided into 5 groups. After a month's training in the fundamentals of Hebrew, they form their own dramatic group, present living newspapers, have a choir and deliver speeches—all, of course, in Hebrew. Many of the students have been far removed from Jewish matters throughout their lives, but during the course are becoming more enthusiastic as they begin to learn something of Jewish literature and traditions. It seems probable that these intensive courses—which are probably unique in the science of language teaching—will become a permanent feature of Israel life.

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The Israel railways are running again and you can now catch a train from Jerusalem to Tel-Aviv and from Tel-Aviv to Haifa. Everyone is happy to see the return of the trains especially as the run commands beautiful vistas.

Between Tel-Aviv and Haifa the train runs alongside the Arab town of Tul-karm. The border of Israel is the edge of the railway track. The Arabs working in the fields watch the passing trains without enthusiasm. A recent report suggested that the carriages should have a notice 'Passengers are requested not to lean out of the State.'

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In Jerusalem, there is a small group of extreme religious fanatics who have organized themselves into a faction called 'Neturai Karta.' Their activities have included the stoning of cars moving on Shabbat, the breaking of the windows of shops and cafés that remain open on Shabbat and other similar forceful protests.

During the festival of Sukkot, the Neturai held their annual conference and decided to issue forth in a body to break up the mixed dancing which was taking place in a public park in Jerusalem. En-route, the police opposed their march and a scuffle ensued in which several of the policemen were injured, one seriously, by thrown stones and other missiles.

Seven members of the Neturai Karta were arrested. However this was Sukkot—and so they were all jailed in a special tabernacle and the next morning a supply of lulavim was brought in for them: but there were only seven of them and so each morning they were joined by three policemen who made up the minyan.

It's all part of the Jewish State.

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*By civil liberty is meant, not only the absence of individual restraint, but liberty within the social system and political organism—a combination of principles and laws which acknowledge, protect, and favor the dignity of man.*

FRANCIS LIEBER: *Civil Liberty and Self-Government*, 1852.

# WASHINGTON NOTES

By MURRAY FRANK

THE 81ST CONGRESS is now in its final lap. This being a Congressional election year, adjournment is scheduled for sometime around the end of July to give members an opportunity to pass their first hurdles in the primary elections which occur in most states during the late summer and early fall, and to organize their campaign strategy and activity up to election day in November.

As has been the case in the past, so this year too there was a slow start in the early months, a good deal of delay and purposeful stalling by various groups and interests. The result is that Congress finds itself faced with one of the worst legislative jams in its history, particularly in the Senate. The mountain of "must" legislation with which the current session began last January has not been leveled off to a satisfactory extent, there is still a considerable amount of unfinished business at this writing, such as the President's civil rights program, Federal aid to education, liberalization of the social security laws to include an additional 12 million workers in the country, the health insurance program, the President's Point Four program to give technical aid to underdeveloped areas in the world, and others.

Some of these may yet be enacted in one form or another before the session ends, but for most of the proposed legislation mentioned above it looks as though their enactment will have to be fought out partly in the coming election by the choice of the voters, and probably in the 82nd Congress.

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THE OUTLOOK for passage of civil rights legislation is not at all encouraging. Anti-poll-tax, anti-lynching and other civil

rights measures did not figure at this session, since every effort was concentrated on the Fair Employment Practices bill (FEPC) in the hope that if the backbone of opposition and filibustering could be broken on this all-important measure there would not be much fight left against the remainder of the civil rights program.

After a sharp parliamentary tug-of-war on the FEPC bill, the House of Representatives passed a substitute measure which is anemic by comparison with the original bill advocated by the Truman Administration. By converting the President's *compulsory* measure into a *voluntary* FEPC, which was accomplished by a coalition of Republicans and conservative Democrats, the House literally cut the heart out of the measure. Without the penalty provisions, the FEPC act will be merely an advisory and "educational" measure of no great value. It will be limited purely to investigation of charges and recommendation for improvement, but it will not have the power to enforce its recommendations other than some moral persuasion.

Disappointing as the voluntary measure may be, it is nevertheless a step forward. For the first time in American history sanction has been given to the principle of employment, i.e. the right to earn a living, which is to be enjoyed by all Americans, regardless of race, creed or national origin. Discrimination in employment against persons of a particular race or religion is clearly denounced in the measure. These, of course, will remain empty gestures if serious efforts are not made to put them to practical use throughout the country.

What are the prospects for passage of the FEPC bill in the Senate? Frankly, the chances are very slim. True, Majority Leader Senator Scott Lucas has



stated that he will bring before the Senate the stronger and original FEPC bill, but a filibuster-to-death is certain to follow. The House-approved voluntary bill stands somewhat of a chance only in this fashion: because it is a watered-down version of the original, it may be possible to obtain the necessary 64 votes to enforce the cloture rule shutting off a filibuster and thus bringing up the bill for a vote. Under such circumstances, it would unquestionably be approved in the Senate and go to the President for his signature. By the time these lines appear in print, the FEPC fight should be in full force.

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ONE OF THE great victories to date in the 81st Congress is the passage of a liberal Displaced Persons bill to supersede the discriminatory DP Act of 1948. After a long and strenuous struggle against a small group of narrow-minded, anti-alien and anti-immigration men in the Senate, the struggle was finally resolved early in April when the liberal bill was approved by a vote of 58 to 15. On the last day, before the final vote was possible, the Senate sat continuously for more than 12 hours slugging its way through no less than 135 amendments, sponsored mostly by Senator Pat McCarran (D., Nev.), arch-foe of immigration.

Through smart maneuvering on the part of Majority Leader Lucas, who was able to get proponents and opponents to agree to a specific limit of debate, no delays or filibusters became possible. It was agreed in advance to begin voting on amendments at a certain time and day and to continue this process until a final vote on the measure is obtained.

The highlights of the Senate-approved bill are:

Admit 344,000 DP's over a three-year period, ending June 30, 1951 (The House version of the bill calls for admitting 339,000 DP's over the same period, so that the differences in the two versions will be worked out by representatives of both houses).

The definition of a displaced person as accepted by the International Refugee Organization is retained, instead of the diluted definition advocated by Senator McCarran who sought to expand it to include the so-called German expellees, or ethnic Germans who were expelled from Central and Eastern European

countries for their collaboration with the Nazis. If McCarran's definition would have been approved, the 10 million ethnic Germans could theoretically have used up all available visas under the DP Act. A provision, however, is contained in the adopted measure whereby 54,000 expellees will be admitted and charged to the regular German quota.

Selection of DP's for admission is to remain in the hands of the DP Commission and is not to be the "exclusive authority" of the Immigration Service or the Foreign Consular Service. Until now the DP Commission had final authority in passing on the eligibility of a DP for admission, but McCarran wanted to give this authority to the Immigration and Consular officials for a slower and more rigid system of screening.

The discriminatory provisions of the DP Act which required that 40 percent of the DP's admitted must be of Baltic origin and 30 percent must be farmers were eliminated, in this way removing some of the worst features of the DP law. These clauses affected Catholics and Jews specifically since most Baltics are Protestants and few Jews could qualify as farmers.

The date line for determining the eligibility of DP's was changed from December 22, 1945, to January 1, 1949, thereby making eligible all DP's who entered the camps after 1945. This provision also discriminated against Jews because many of the Jews who fled Eastern Europe in 1946 and later could not qualify for admission under the old provision.

These and several other reforms were stubbornly fought by McCarran and his cronies in the Senate, who exploited the current pervasive fear of all aliens. This is a strange phenomenon for a nation which was largely built by immigrants and their descendants. Yet despite their opposition, the sober and fair-minded judgment of the American people pervaded and this country at last has a liberal approach to the DP problem and an early solution may be looked for.

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ARE McCARRAN and his friends giving up their efforts to keep the gates of this country shut to immigration, after losing their fight against a liberal DP law? Not in the least. About two weeks after the DP issue was finally resolved in the Senate, McCarran introduced a bill which

calls for a complete revision of our immigration and naturalization laws. He based his bill on a study of the immigration system which a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee has been pursuing for more than two years. The study was originally undertaken for the purpose of finding ways and means to restrict immigration to a trickle.

McCarran describes the aim of his bill as "designed to eliminate the weaknesses in our immigration and naturalization laws." By "weaknesses" he means that immigrants of certain races, religions or nationalities are still able to enter this country in small numbers annually. He therefore proposes a "sound" immigration policy which is to include the following points:

"Simplification of the quota system, but maintenance of approximately the same basic formula for determining the number of people allowed to enter the United States." This is his way of saying that he wants to have the quotas changed and made smaller, and extending preferential consideration to nationals of certain countries.

"Establishment of a principle of selection, within the quota system, that is geared to the economic needs of the United States." In other words, selective immigration. Not only will immigration be limited by the quota system, but immigrants will be selected according to trades and professions as the need arises in this country; on the basis, all "undesirables" can be easily rejected and no explanations given.

"Tightening of the screening procedure for applicants for admission" and "plugging of the loopholes in the present law through which subversive elements have been gaining admission to the United States." These are additional safeguards to keep out all those who are undesirable because of race, creed or national origin.

It is extremely doubtful whether the Senate will get around to consideration of McCarran's new anti-immigration measure, in view of the planned adjournment in July. It will be interesting to observe whether the Gentleman from Nevada will use the same delaying tactics in this case as he applied so efficiently in the case of the liberal DP bill.

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WHEN CONGRESS adjourned last October after a 10-month long session, it sent

on to President Truman a bill calling for a ten-year plan for the rehabilitation of some 94,000 Hopi and Navajo Indians in the Southwest at a cost of \$88,570,000. Mr. Truman vetoed that measure on the grounds that several harmful amendments were added, deliberately or not, which constituted a threat to the water rights of the Indians and brought the tribesmen under the state courts thus giving them a lesser degree of protection than they enjoy under the Federal courts. A new measure was then drawn up to meet the President's objections and this substitute bill, which also had the support of the Navajo Tribal Council, was quickly approved by Congress and immediately signed by the President.

In affixing his signature to the act, Mr. Truman pointed out that the expenditure of \$88,570,000 in the next decade will "help the Indians achieve greater economic stability, will provide better educational opportunities and will lead to the improvement of their health." Actually, the President is understating the case. The rehabilitation program for the Indians was requested last year by the Department of Interior which conducted a survey of conditions and found the Indians in a state of near destitution. It discovered that the Indians were poor because they live on poor land, which is eroded and subject to drought. The educational opportunities were so poor that on the Navajo reservation 80 percent of the residents do not speak English. The death rate was tragically high, particularly among infants and children, and among adults suffering from tuberculosis. In short, an ancient and valiant people simply have not had the opportunities available to all other Americans.

It is hoped to correct this situation in part through the ten-year plan now enacted by Congress. Under it, a 25-million dollar school program will be undertaken on the Indian reservations. Other projects include health improvement, road construction, irrigation facilities, and opening up business and industrial opportunities for the Indians. Similar programs are now also being planned for the Creek, Seminole, Choctaw and Chickasaw Indian tribes in Oklahoma. Perhaps we shall still make good on our responsibilities toward these people, now a destitute and decimated minority group, responsibilities which we have been shamefully slow in fulfilling.

A FEELING OF UNEASINESS and concern over the failure of our denazification program in Germany and the constant stream of reports on the revival of Nazism have finally convinced some of our more serious and liberal legislators that the situation is getting out of hand. Complaints on the floor of the Senate or House were of no great help, and equally ineffective were the letters addressed directly to Secretary of State Acheson. Finally, a group of eight Senators introduced a resolution in the Senate in the latter part of April calling for a bipartisan commission to be appointed by President Truman with the specific purpose of conducting a study and investigation of American policy in Germany and its coordination with our over-all foreign policy.

The resolution was introduced by Senator Guy Gillette (D., Iowa), with the support of the following Senators: Democrats—Claude Pepper (Fla.), Paul Douglas (Ill.), Harley Kilgore (W. Va.), Herbert Lehman (N. Y.), and Dennis Chavez (N. M.); Republicans—Irving Ives (N. Y.) and Robert Hendrickson (N. J.). A group of House members, including Adolph Sabath (D., Ill.), Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. (D., N. Y.) and others, is planning to introduce a similar resolution in the House.

These forward-looking men and many others in Washington are beginning to realize that Germany is gradually again emerging as an international problem in more than one way. Reports have been coming out of there all too frequently of renewed Nazi activity, of hidden conspiracies, of numerous desecrations of Jewish cemeteries and a growing anti-Semitism. The fact that Germany is now divided into two separate areas, one under the control of Soviet Russia and the other under Western control, does not appear to be a deterrent to the Germans of both areas to make preliminary preparations for "Der Tag" when they will be reunited and free to embroil the world in a new conflagration and new slaughter of untold millions of innocents.

The growth of anti-Semitism and the revival of Nazism in Germany are a good barometer of the rotten and constantly deteriorating political situation in that country. In all of Germany there are today less than 50,000 Jews, about 25 to 30,000 of whom will emigrate during 1950 to the U. S., Israel, Canada and other

countries. But even this ever diminishing number looms unusually large in Nazi-minded Germany. It is unthinkable that democratic America, which fought for a new world and a new Germany, should tolerate a rebirth of Nazism during a period when this country is in control of an important part of Germany.

Specifically, the resolution introduced in the Senate directs the proposed Presidential commission to investigate the following: the existence of political parties and groups based on anti-democratic ideologies; the reemergence of German cartels and trusts and their effect on German democratic efforts and world peace; the failure of the educational system in disseminating democratic ideas in Germany; evidences of militaristic, ultra-nationalistic, anti-Semitic and other anti-democratic propaganda in the German press, radio and films; whether the German war potential is being restored to an unwarranted extent; the penetration of former into the political, judicial, economic and educational life of the country, etc.

Do we still have the time to undo some of the damage which made possible a resurgence of the anti-democratic forces in Germany? From all indications, it does appear that it is later in Germany than we think.

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EARLY THIS SPRING President Truman's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Forces issued its first report on the progress of racial integration in the Air Force, based on the new racial policy adopted last summer which provides for the abolition of segregated units and establishes equality of training and assignment for whites and Negroes alike. The committee's first survey states that this program of integration is "working well and without friction" and that 71 percent of the Negroes in the Air Force are already "living and working in integrated conditions." Significant is the statement in the committee's report which refers to the views of the commanding officers on the new racial policy in the armed forces:

"Without any exception, they (i.e. the commanding officers) added that their fears had been completely groundless, and that they were amazed at the ease with which the new policy had been effected and the absence of trouble."

The policy is now being expanded to the other branches of the armed services. The U. S. Army showed that it has taken a realistic approach to the problem by abandoning the racial quota on enlistments, which in the past served as a barrier to Negro enlistments and deprived our Army of a source of efficient manpower. By its abolition of the quota system, the Army has adopted the major points of the President's Committee on Equality, which reflects a sane and broad-minded attitude by our military leaders. No doubt, many of these leaders must be wondering today why this logical step was not taken long ago.

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ISRAEL'S SECOND ANNIVERSARY of its establishment as an independent state was the cause of much jubilation and official observance in Washington. The Embassy of Israel here was host at a large diplomatic reception attended by over a thousand persons, including the Ambassadors, Ministers and other diplomatic representatives of 36 countries. Very prominent was the large representation of high government officials, Cabinet members, Supreme Court Justices, State Department functionaries, Members of Congress, and a large contingent from the press corps.

The reaction in Congress was overwhelming. On Monday, April 24, a special "Salute to Israel" took place in the House of Representatives in which 40 Congressmen participated with brief speeches and statements of greetings and felicitations to Israel. Throughout that week not a day passed without several members, in the House and in the Senate, taking the floor to voice their sentiments and good wishes. All in all, close to 100 Senators and Representatives expressed their friendship for Israel in this manner and also took occasion to urge the United

States to take precautionary steps to assure Israel's security against Arab threats and aggression. The Senate unanimously adopted a resolution of greetings to Israel, which in itself is an unusual and unique step in American history.

This great outpouring of genuine friendship and warm-heartedness on the part of the American people, through their representatives in Congress, should help cement strong ties between the United States and the State of Israel. The people of Israel will undoubtedly feel very much encouraged to know that they have many friends and supporters in this country, for any eventuality that the future may bring.

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IN CONCLUSION, a brief word to our friends in Chicago. Your correspondent has had the privilege of observing at close range for many years the good work of Congressman Adolph J. Sabath, and more recently that of his younger colleague Congressman Sidney R. Yates, both of your city. Both are competent men, liberal-minded in the true sense of its meaning, honest legislators who always have at heart the underdog, and always alert to defend Jewish rights and support Jewish causes in this country and abroad. Chicagoans have a justifiable right to feel proud of these two men and the excellent work they are rendering in Congress.

Your primaries are over. Both men have been renominated. One cannot for a moment picture the next Congress without an Adolph Sabath. It is, likewise, difficult to visualize a truly liberal Congress without men like Sabath, Yates and others who think and vote as they do. Send them back to us next November and make certain that Chicago continues to be ably represented in the next Congress.

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BUY UNITED STATES SAVINGS BONDS

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# West Coast Letter

By CAREY McWILLIAMS

OF THE NEWS of the last quarter from the coast, I should say that the big items are: the loyalty oath fight on the campus of the University of California; the decision in the Bridges case; and the refusal of the Supreme Court to issue a writ of review in the case of the Hollywood Ten (this bad news stemmed from Washington, of course, but it has a special interest to residents of Southern California).

The loyalty oath controversy at Berkeley presents about the clearest case that might be imagined of the real workings and dynamics of most similar "loyalty" plots. On October 11, 1940, the Regents of the University of California—the world's largest university—adopted a resolution to the effect that Communists were ineligible for employment in any capacity. This resolution seemed to satisfy the bigots and superpatriots until the University of Washington, early in January, 1949, discharged two members of the faculty, both holding permanent tenure, solely because they were admitted members of the Communist Party. The California legislature promptly applauded this action by sending Robert Gordon Sproul, president of the University, a copy of a resolution in which this sentiment was voiced. The purpose of the resolution, of course, was to put President Sproul on the spot.

Sproul, who is what is known as a

"slick" politician and a "smooth" operator, promptly asked the Regents to require a special test-oath of all faculty members and employees and the Regents obligingly concurred. Sproul now abjectly admits that he made this recommendation, not because he feared that Communists might infiltrate the faculty, but because he was afraid of what the legislature might do to the University's budget. He was also afraid, so he says, that the legislature might adopt a test-oath bill which Senator Jack B. Tenney had proposed. Thus it is perfectly clear—indeed it is admitted—that the test-oath was adopted by the Regents not out of any fear of the Communists but out of a craven fear of demagogues in the state legislature, more particularly, the demagogue who headed up the Committee on Un-American Activities.

As it turned out, Dr. Sproul was needlessly concerned for the legislature finally became so irritated with Senator Tenney that he was removed as chairman of the Committee on Un-American Activities, his various thought-control bills were tabled (all as reported in an earlier letter), and the University was given a generous budget. But by this time the Regents had publicly announced that a special test-oath would be required, so that the "gallant" Sproul could not retreat. As might have been expected, the faculty promptly announced, through the

Academic Senate, that it was opposed to the test-oath as a matter of principle. But the Regents could not withdraw the oath, now, without appearing to "appease" the faculty. Hence once again the faculty declined to approve the test-oath and the issue was tossed back to the Regents who issued an ultimatum. By this time, Sproul realized the catastrophic mistake he had made when he had proposed the test-oath and he now sought to win back the confidence of the faculty by announcing that he had changed his mind about the necessity of the oath. This action, of course, only infuriated the Tories on the Board of Regents who complained, and quite understandably, that it was Sproul who had sold them on the idea of a special test-oath in the first place. Meeting in an effort to resolve the crisis, the Regents split for the first time, with Governor Warren, who serves as an ex-officio member of the Board, being forced to line up with his great pal Sproul in the minority opposition. It will be remembered that Sproul placed Warren's name in nomination for the Presidency in the Republican Convention of 1948.

With the issue thus joined, incredible pressure was brought to bear on the faculty to force them to abandon the fight and sign the oath. In a referendum, the faculty voted to disapprove the loyalty oath but indicated their approval of the policy of not hiring Communists. Although the two actions cannot easily be reconciled, the faculty had at least reaffirmed its opposition to the loyalty oath. Then still more pressure was applied to individual faculty members to stimulate the equivalent of a "back to work" movement. Various professors began to wilt and to announce that they were "glad" to sign the oath and that they were simply "amazed" to learn that any of their colleagues should find the oath inconsistent with the principles of academic freedom. Among the professors who not only approved the oath but did so in a way that cut the ground from beneath

their colleagues who were in opposition to the oath, were Roscoe Pound, Dr. Gustave O. Arlt, and Dean L. Dale Coffman of the School of Law. It is, indeed, distressing to report that Pound and Coffman, both lawyers, should have taken the position they did.

One cannot say just yet how the issue will finally be resolved but there can be no doubt that this is one of the most important issues which has arisen in the history of American education. The "resisters" have been greatly encouraged by the magnificent statement of Chancellor Robert M. Hutchins that the members of the faculty of the University of Chicago had agreed to assess themselves 2 per cent of their salaries to raise a fund to assist those of their colleagues who might forfeit their jobs at Berkeley by refusing to sign the abhorrent test-oath. Seldom has a university president, or a faculty, acted more courageously in defense of academic freedom and with a keener sense of strategy. For the Hutchins announcement was beautifully timed and can only have had the effect of bolstering up the morale of the sorely harassed Berkeley professors.

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THREE TIMES the government tried to prove that Harry Bridges was a Communist and three times the government struck out. That should have ended the inning but, in these times, the government can always change the rules if it is determined to strike down some particular "witch." And so a fourth Bridges trial was scheduled. This time, however, the government came up with a new and menacing legal gimmick. Instead of charging that Bridges was a Communist—which would have forced the government to prove the main issue—the government simply charged that Bridges had committed perjury by having once denied that he was a Communist. Thus the government did not have to prove that Bridges was a Communist; on the contrary, Bridges had now to prove that he was

not a Communist. And, as we are beginning to realize, it is practically impossible for any labor leader, or liberal, to prove that he is not a witch—a state of affairs which will continue as long as the current witch-hunt continues. This is, I think, the basic explanation for the fact that an American jury finally convicted Bridges after four days of deliberation.

Even so the verdict came as a great shock to west coast liberals who found it difficult to believe that a jury could find for the government in a prosecution in which such outrageous methods were used to secure a conviction. Government witnesses freely confessed, from the stand, that they were liars and perjurers. One "star" witness admitted that he had been paid more than \$5,000 in the guise of "expert" witness fees. This particular witness lives in a community within commuting distance of San Francisco; his testimony consumed only a short time; and it would be difficult to image *any* subject on which he could testify as an expert. Yet he drew down \$5,000—for telling "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

I had the privilege of chairing a great mass meeting called by the Bridges Defense Committee on April 19th. The meeting was held in the Municipal Auditorium in San Francisco and was attended by over 7,000 people. It was one of the most exciting meetings that San Francisco has had for a long time and it convinced me that the rank-and-file of the San Francisco labor movement intends to back Bridges all the way in his uphill fight to reverse this most unjust verdict.

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**F**OLLOWING THE VERDICT in the Bridges case came word that the Supreme Court had refused to review the case of the Hollywood Ten. Any one who has read the opinion of the Circuit court in this case—an opinion which the Supreme Court has now inferentially approved—will understand the dismay with which

the Supreme Court's decision was received in Los Angeles. The decision not to grant a writ, however, was in line with the strategy of the Truman majority on the court, as this strategy has been revealed in a number of recent cases. The strategy seems to be to force on the various circuit courts the onus of upholding the domestic implications of the Truman Doctrine and of attempting to keep the tough, the "embarrassing," issues out of the Supreme Court. This enables the administration to contend that the President's appointees on the Supreme Court have really not taken illiberal positions; they have merely refused to hear cases in which the circuit courts have upheld encroachments on basic civil rights! To be sure the contention is entirely specious but in these times, a public that will believe the fantastically irrelevant and circumstantially incredible testimony with which Louis Budenz has sought to prove Owen Lattimore is a Communist, will probably believe anything. Incidentally before this latest episode in red-baiting is over, Dr. Lattimore may find that he is in much the same position as Bridges and the Hollywood Ten. It will be a dark day indeed when the Hollywood writers—ten fine-spirited socially responsible citizens—enter federal prison to serve sentences of one year each for the sole offense of having refused to surrender their consciences to the tender keeping of J. Parnell Thomas, now serving a much milder sentence in Danbury Prison for the offense of having defrauded his government and picked the pockets of his secretaries.

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**F**OR MANY YEARS, now, the Los Angeles Bar Association has refused to accept Negro lawyers into membership. The policy was first challenged some five years ago by a group of lawyers headed by Daniel G. Marshall, a prominent member of the bar and chairman of the Catholic Inter-Racial Council. As a result of this initial needling, the bar association

took two plebiscites, in 1947 and 1948, on the question of admitting Negroes into membership, but the issue lost on both occasions. Not to be pushed aside so easily, Marshall raised the issue at several conventions of the State Bar and brought a suit in which he sought to get the courts to issue a writ compelling the admission of otherwise qualified Negroes into membership; but the courts refused to grant the petition. Then the State Bar made the mistake of inviting Ralph Bunche to speak at its annual convention last year. Bunche, who hails from Los Angeles, is a very popular figure in California these days. With Governor Warren in attendance, Ralph proceeded to tell off the Los Angeles Bar in a very polite but effective manner. The speech, of course, resulted in renewed pressure on the Los Angeles Bar Association. Finally the trustees submitted a new plebiscite to the members in January of this year and the members voted 1,018 to 593 to set aside the 50-year-old bar against Negroes. Among the Negro lawyers who had taken an active part in the campaign to end the discrimination, was Loren Miller, outstanding Negro lawyer of Los Angeles, a man who won a nationwide reputation for his brilliant argument in the precedent-shattering case of *Shelley vs. Kramer*. Miller was naturally the first applicant for admission under the new policy. But, with characteristic pettiness, the membership committee of the association returned his application! In token compliance with the new policy, however, they proceeded to grant the application of Thomas L. Griffith, Jr., former president of the NAACP. The diehards of the association, in other words, simply could not resist the temptation to cast a spite vote against Miller, who easily ranks among the top lawyers on the west coast. But at least the five-year-fight finally resulted in a nominal victory and in the lowering of one additional bar against Negroes.

TO RESIDENTS OF PORTLAND, the department store of Meier & Frank has long occupied a unique position in the ranks of business and civic organizations. Not even such stores as J. L. Hudson in Detroit, Marshall-Field in Chicago, or Neiman-Marcus in Dallas compare with Meier & Frank in terms of local prestige. Most Portlanders are about as proud of Meier & Frank as Moscovites are supposed to be proud of their subway. Some time ago, Meier & Frank were charged with certain unfair labor practices and a hearing was finally held in the local U. S. Court House with Aaron Frank himself on the stand. It is not often that the press of Portland has a chance to report Aaron Frank under cross-examination. But, in this instance, the papers ignored the hearing. It was Monroe Sweetland, publisher of the sprightly little *Oregon Democrat*, who finally called attention to the manner in which the press has handled Portland's "sacred cow." To redeem itself, the *Portland Oregonian* proceeded to give front-page prominence to the report of the labor board which found Meier & Frank guilty of most of the unfair labor practices. The *Oregon Journal* reported the fact, too, but with great discretion and tact and almost sotto voce.

Meier & Frank, long known as "Portland's Own Store," proceeded to remove all advertising from the *Oregonian*. The store was the *Oregonian's* largest advertiser, carrying three times the volume of the next largest customer but the management of the paper has stood pat and has refused to make its peace with the store. Nowadays people are inclined to refer to Meier & Frank not as "Portland's Own Store" but as "The Store That Owns Portland." Throughout the Northwest, public opinion has rallied behind the *Oregonian*. At this time, it is a little too early to predict the outcome but the *Oregonian* seems to be winning a courageous, and extremely important, fight for freedom of the press.



# BOOKS

Books reviewed in this issue may be purchased at the regular price through the Book Service Department of the CHICAGO JEWISH FORUM, 82 West Washington Street, Chicago 2, Illinois.

*These Our People: Minorities in American Culture.* By Richard A. Schermerhorn. D. C. Heath and Co. 578 pp. \$4.50.

Professor Schermerhorn, who has long been engaged in the practical as well as theoretical aspects of minority problems, has just written one of the most useful rounded discussions of intercultural relations that has yet appeared. He has dealt with the unique as well as interrelated aspects of American minority people, combining an interesting historical as well as analytical treatment in which his own conclusions as well as the best thought of hundreds of scholars and practitioners in this field are blended. The interest for the general reader is heightened by the literary device of introducing each chapter with relevant and convincing dialog taken from actual situations.

Reserving his theoretical discussions for the final chapters, the author narrates the background, characteristics, and status of each of the chief minorities, Negroes, Jews, Italians, the various Slav peoples, Mexicans, Indians, and Japanese. For practical reasons, he has decided to concentrate upon these groups rather than to spread over smaller or more isolated groups such as the Chinese, the Armenians, or the Puerto Ricans. He begins with the various facts and fallacies about race in the light of recent findings and stresses the environmental approach to the culture of these people. While his title suggests his deep sympathies, his discussion is completely objective throughout.

His conclusions, which include a discussion of prejudice and the shortcomings of certain organizational approaches, are founded partly upon his conviction that cultural pluralism is infinitely preferable to the dangers of cultural monism, though

he fully recognizes the difficulties lying in the way of any general acceptance of the values inherent in diversity of culture. As a sociologist, he knows that the cards are stacked against the cultural pluralist, but society's best interest requires that it learn to accept the high degree of understanding and tolerance that will enable cultural groups to get along without effacing themselves at the will of the intolerant majority. He writes, "In the last analysis, the group preference for homogeneity is an irreducible datum revealed by anthropology and sociology in all societies." Realistically, he feels that all programs for betterment must be shaped with this fact in mind so that tactics may be successful and not unintelligently militant. As for the nature of prejudices, he calls attention to various studies of attitudes among college students which show that prejudices are definitely related to certain philosophies of life, especially those with an authoritarian outlook or those with an extremely individualistic bias. "Anti-Negro feelings appear to be highest among Roman Catholics, less among Protestants, and lowest among Jews or those with no religious affiliation." Professor Schermerhorn, it should be pointed out, has had an active Protestant church background, but avoids a sectarian point of view.

A large section of this book is devoted to the Jews and antisemitism. As a critical scholar, he has examined the innumerable economic, psychological, and other theories of antisemitism, but finds no single explanation alone adequate to cover all the facts—though there is much of relevance in each. He recognizes the endless circle involved in so many theories, e.g., the charge that "clannishness" causes discrimination; obviously the number of Jewish agencies and organizations

increases as discrimination increases and secularized Jews return to the fold. Zionism cannot claim to have solved the problems for the American Jew, although Israel has decidedly bettered the lot of European Jewish refugees. Antisemitism can be reduced or mitigated by intelligent and scientific group action—and the author has many specific suggestions—but he feels that the Jew must reconcile himself to enduring a certain amount of discrimination in a society which can with difficulty learn the lesson of cultural pluralism.

Finding that no single panacea exists, the author evaluates the programs of the various intercultural groups and treats their work sympathetically. He does point out that frequently minority leaders set up objectives that run counter to the best interests of other minorities; for example, some Negro leaders take a hostile attitude to foreign competition or lump all "whites" in the same category. Jews do not always see the similarity that exists between their problem and that of other groups. Above all, he counsels tactics based largely upon the traditions and realities of the community. This would exclude any frontal attack upon the Negro problem in the South as would be involved in an attempt to eliminate segregation directly by law in that area. First must come tangible immediate goals such as housing, employment discrimination, and other visible evidences of discrimination in the locality. He gives a very favorable picture of the Springfield Plan and explains some of the difficulties that have arisen in connection with the FEPC.

Altogether, Professor Schermerhorn has written a sound, highly readable book. It is clear that he rides no hobbies of interpretation and may antagonize those who do. To a large extent this book represents the present state of opinion and analysis held by the best specialists in race relations. The author looks for his solutions within a democratic framework which maximizes the freedom of each individual without sacrificing social gains to an authoritarian approach. He is skeptical of the degree of genuine progress made in race relations within the USSR, though he concedes some advances since Czarist days. *They Our People* deserves a wide audience both among the experts and among the uninitiated to whom the book will come as an intellectual adventure.

HARVEY WISH

*Our Sovereign State*. Edited by Robert Allen. Vanguard Press. 413 pp. \$5.00.

This is a challenging book for those who respond courageously when the odds are against them, and a dispiriting book for those sensitive souls who sicken at the Stygian stench of political sin. It begins:

State government is the tawdriest, most incompetent, and most stultifying unit of the nation's political structure.

In state governments are to be found in their most extreme and vicious forms all the worst evils of misrule in the country. Venality, open domination and manipulation by vested interests, unspeakable callousness in the care of the sick, aged, and unfortunate, criminal negligence in law enforcement, crass deprivation of primary constitutional rights, obfuscation, obsolescence, obstructionism, incompetence, and even outright dictatorship are widespread characteristics.

Further, imbedded between the municipalities at the bottom and the federal system on top, state government is the wellspring of many of the principal poisons that plague both.

Unfortunately, every syllable of this indictment is proved in an introduction and twelve chapters, dealing with the sovereign states of Massachusetts ("Prisoner of the Past"), New York ("Backslider"), Pennsylvania ("Bossed Cornucopia"), Georgia ("Paradise of Oligarchy"), Ohio ("Oxcart Government"), Illinois ("The 'New Look' and one of the few hopeful spots"), Wisconsin, Louisiana ("Beak Too Big for Its Belly"), Nebraska ("Norris: In Victory and Defeat"), Texas ("Owned by Oil and Interlocking Directorates"), Utah ("Contrary State"), and California. These are simply typical of the forty-eight states. The pattern spreads across the continent and spells out "The Shame of the States."

Political corruption inevitably produces moral degradation. Real freedom cannot thrive under the prevailing state system. Industrial democracy is a mockery; human dignity not even a phrase. As Judge Orville A. Park is quoted as having said of Georgia, the state of the Talmadges, the Columbians, the Klan: "We have voted for men and not for measures. We are divided into factions and not into parties. We are controlled by passion and prejudice and not by principles. We have produced demagogues and not statesmen. We have quarreled among ourselves over small issues and petty offices . . ."

Happily, this is not a book of mere generalizations, however bright or penetrating. It is buttressed on every page with facts, facts, facts, ugly facts, disturbing facts, but "true facts." Now and then there are unnecessary little inaccuracies (as when Simon Cameron is described as the successor of Stanton as Secretary of War, when the reverse is the case). Now and then the judgments are faulty (as when our own Mayor Martin H. Kennelly is set upon a pedestal when actually he is a man of limited vision if good intentions). But in the larger sense the book is true and sound, and each chapter of it has its own virtues.

ELMER GERTZ

*A Short History of The Jewish People.*  
Illustrated Edition Revised and Enlarged,  
by Cecil Roth. East and West Library.  
470 pp. \$5.00.

The history of a people must be rewritten in every generation, to keep pace with the social transformation which occurs. This is all the more true in the case of the Jewish people which, in the last hundred years, has experienced a total change of geographic locale, occupational structure, philosophical outlook, and linguistic expression. In such a period, the renewed study of history provides an anchorage for the mind; it interprets to a bewildered generation the ways of their own past, so that they can serve as a guide-post for the future. However, in the writing of Jewish history, distressing difficulties exist which hardly any other historian encounters. Jewish history extends over an enormous span of time encompassing, as it does, the events of more than four millennia. This is a longer span than the one described by the history of any other living people except the Chinese. Moreover, in contradistinction to Chinese history, the locale of Jewish history is ever changing. While the Near East, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and little Israel, remains an eternal theme, there are many facets to Jewish life in the Near East itself that are making themselves felt; there is further the subsequent widening of the stage of Jewish history, to include Greece and Italy, Spain and Portugal, France and Germany, Bohemia, Poland, Russia and the United States; numerous contacts, friendly as well as hostile, are made while the travel occurs; and the sources

are in many languages. The Jewish historian has to have a grasp of antiquity, Semitic and Mediterranean, of the middle ages and of modern times; of the social, cultural and political aspects of history. Finally, if all this is to be told in one volume, he needs a lucky star to guide his selection.

Naturally, no man is an expert in so wide a field; implied therein is the temptation to second, third, and fourth hand story-telling on the one hand, and to over-emphasis where one actually does know something, on the other; Cecil Roth, for instance, is a specialist on the history of the Sephardic Jewries, particularly the one of Italy; he is most intimately at home in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, that is the twilight period between the end of the Middle Ages and the dawn of the modern period; he emphasizes social and cultural backgrounds in addition to the customary tale of suffering and literary achievement. All this is to the good: to dwell more on the Mediterranean than on the Germano-Slavic stage of Jewish history broadens our vision while a more thorough understanding of social and cultural backgrounds is precisely what this generation of readers desires; if anything, they would like more of it.

Cecil Roth has the gift of telling a quick-moving story, in the fashion of a journalist-reporter: he knows the thing, he was there when it happened, he summarizes it for you. Naturally, the danger is that one stays on the surface, that one never exhausts the potentialities of a story and that the deepest motivational springs of human action, both in those described and in those addressed, remain untouched. Quite possibly, many complex phenomena are presented in too facile a way; too much that is actually dubious appears as if it were taken for granted and few of the innumerable question marks of Jewish history become visible. Yet, of the many hands that have tried themselves on the task of writing a Jewish history suited to the needs of our generation, the hand of Cecil Roth is the most subtle, the most discerning, the most adroitly expert; it is the hand of an experienced educator—propagandist. Like everybody else, Cecil Roth has his predilections and prejudices, but he avoids the pitfalls of blunt partisanship and the excess of hyper-nationalism. His sense of quality is perhaps his outstanding virtue: hardly ever does he fasten his attention on an unworthy object. The physical ap-

pearance of the book is perfect. The illustrations which he chooses are so well selected and so beautifully reproduced that one wishes there might be many more. Both the beauty of Israel and the reality of the Jews are in them. Yes, indeed, they awaken the desire to see a book of Jewish history presented to us in the not too far distant future which would consist entirely of illustrations of the highest order. While we wait, however, we have in the present book, the most humanly conceived and the most readable one volume Jewish history which exists today.

WERNER J. CAHNMAN

*Governments of Danubian Europe*, by Andrew Gyorgy. Rinehart and Company. 376 pp. + vii. \$4.00.

In spite of its imposing facade, which is bound to impress the reader not a specialist in this field, Gyorgy's volume, as a contribution, is interesting as an effort to parade as the only and latest valuable study of Danubia. As such it is not only entirely undistinguished but, what is even worse, also smug and even misleading in its generalization (not to speak of facts).

Part of the trouble is due to the author's esoteric selection and use of sources. That for instance, *Uj Magyarorszag* and *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* are used as sources of information on Czechoslovakia, is an indication that Gyorgy could not avoid having his Hungarian background influence his scholarship; the same tendency is displayed in his *Representative Bibliography* (pp. 352-365), wherein one group of specialists in Danubia are painted white and another considerable group is confined to utter oblivion. Concretely speaking, while, again, Hungarian and German sources abound here, numerous valuable studies published by Orbis before World War II are not listed—although this bibliography covers the years 1918-1948. Since Lengyel's *The Danube* (New York: Random House, 1939) covers Gyorgy's field, although in a more popular manner, it is relegated to non-existence by Gyorgy's dictum. The reviewer's *Balkan Politics* (Stanford University Press, 1948) and

*Central Eastern Europe* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1946), not to speak of other studies of Danubia (such as a series of the geopolitical aspects of this region in the *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*), are confined to utter oblivion. These may not be valuable, in Gyorgy's opinion, but a responsible scholar cannot avoid knowing of their existence inasmuch as they appeared under the imprint of responsible publishing houses. Other examples of these unfortunate tendencies by Gyorgy could be cited in all parts of his book.

Not only is the book remarkable for what it omits, but it is also misleading in its statements. Just to cite a few examples: The chapter on Czechoslovakia states that "there was no profound cleavage here between the resistance movement at home and the legally constituted government in exile abroad" (p. 71); but Benes' memoirs reveal clearly his troubles with the communist forces. After 1918, "the new countries were devoid of natural defenses" (p. 15); yet, on p. 69, Gyorgy talks about "the geographic stronghold of Bohemia". On p. 32 he talks about "the lower nobility;" but there was no "lower nobility in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria or Yugoslavia—unless Gyorgy wants to imply that the sections formerly belonging to Austria-Hungary had Austria-Hungary's noblemen. "Under the peasant leadership the Rumanian Parliament voted in 1918 a radical land reform" (p. 47); but, contrary to Gyorgy, the reform was realized by the Liberal Party, and the Peasant Party, (later fused into the National Peasant Party) was formed only after World War I. Other numerous misstatements could be cited, not to speak of the poor way of handling the Jewish problem in the region. Although anti-semitism has had its numerous ramifications in all aspects of Danubia's life, the index has only 2 pages (pp. 29, 31) given to "Jewry."

Obviously, Gyorgy's book is, on a whole, a disappointing performance. The discerning reader would do well to regard it as an exhibit of Gyorgy's highly prejudiced opinions and frequent misstatements, rather than an authoritative source of light regarding the historical and contemporary problems of Danubian Europe.

JOSEPH S. ROUCEK



*Jewish Artists of the 19th and 20th Centuries*, by Karl Schwarz. Philosophical Library. 273 pp. \$4.75.

Were there a plethora of books on Jewish cultural subjects in English, one could easily afford to pass over the less useful volumes in cursory fashion. Because of the paucity of material, however, each new book is of importance and merits consideration. In this volume, we are presented with biographical summaries of the careers of several dozen Jewish artists (European, American, and Palestinian), together with illustrations of their works. The artists vary from individuals intensely interested in Jewish themes to others where one has to strain to find "Jewish" influences at play. The author portrays each artist against the cultural and social background responsible for his development. Dr. Schwarz, who has served as director of the Tel Aviv Museum, is the author of *Die Juden in der Kunst* as well as a Hebrew volume on modern Jewish art in Israel. His present endeavor includes some material from both these books, but *Jewish Artists of the 19th and 20th Centuries* is certainly much less effective than these previous volumes.

Where did Dr. Schwarz and his publishers go wrong? Apparently it was thought that popularizing the style ("jazzing it up" is, I suppose, the colloquialism which covers this best) would make the endeavor more acceptable to an American public:

As the ship moves slowly up the broad Hudson bay, after a long sea voyage, the traveler is greeted first by the huge statue of Liberty on Bedloe's Island. The ocean liner slides past it, for it is not yet at journey's end. And then the real landmarks of the new world arise before the amazed eye of the newcomer.

Not only does the author indulge in these distracting excursions but the style of writing soon affects the body of the material and Schwarz begins to write art history in a semi-fictional style:

And now, at last, after years of struggle, isolation and rejection, success seems to be coming his way. He (Ryback) is extended an invitation to come to England, and there he finds a great deal of recognition. With renewed courage he returns to Paris to prepare for a new exhibit, but an ailment that had long been developing puts him in a sickbed. While his last creations are being admired at a large special exhibit in the Galerie des Beaux Arts

by many who predict a great future for the master, the doctors are at the bedside of the artist who is wrestling with death.

In addition, the author intrudes himself into his work and indulges in personal anecdote which does not advance the development of his history:

I met him (Band) frequently, the first time when he was just starting in Berlin. When I saw him again in Paris several years later, he was exactly the same, except that his colors had a more harmonious effect. We met again in Palestine and, once more, after a lapse of a few years, in Paris. He had just returned from Lithuania and had brought with him a number of landscapes.

General publishers can render a great service by producing Jewish books. Let it be said that the Philosophical Library has published volumes of merit in the Jewish field. In the present instance, however, accuracy and accepted English spelling, certainly a prerequisite for readability, are sadly missing. A few examples suffice: (Baron) Guenzburg for Günzburg; Brodetzky, the Jewish sugar king of Russia, for Brodsky; Talmud Thora for Talmud Torah; Hajim for Chaim; Peltjura for Petlura; Kiev for Kiév. By Jewish-Hebrew Seminary of America the author apparently means the Jewish Theological Seminary of America; the Hermitage Museum is misspelled as Eremitage.

The style of the book also detracts from its usefulness. Either it was translated by a particularly heavy-handed individual or the author's inadequate English was not edited. Notice the following renditions:

The frescoes ordered for Rockefeller Center in New York (from Rivera) led to such a violent political controversy between capitalism and proletariat that they finally had to be removed.

While Ginzburg enjoyed public success with his pleasant and skillfully done children's busts, he is of little interest to us in his academic insignificance.

Art books place a particular burden on the book designer. The present volume is not at all handsome. How can the reader be expected to enjoy a tastelessly produced book on art?

Dr. Schwarz has many worth while things to say. He has studied assiduously the works of earlier Jewish artists such as Moritz Oppenheim, Isador Kaufmann, and Josef Israels. The author is in close contact with artistic life in Israel and

provides us with interesting material about phases of Palestinian culture. Although he is not intimately acquainted with the American scene, his treatment of Weber, Walkowitz, Lozowick, Shahn, and others, is spirited. This book, however, has been produced with so many limitations as to neutralize its objective of increasing knowledge and appreciation of Jewish art.

MARSHALL SKLARE

*Shelley's Eccentricities*, by Carl Grabo.  
The University of New Mexico Press.  
84 pp. \$1.00.

Carl Grabo, one of the leading Shelley specialists in this country, here ventures to discuss one aspect of Shelley's complex genius that has provoked intense controversy, the question of Shelley's alleged abnormality. In order to avoid damaging, value-freighted terms, the author prefers to use the more neutral expression "eccentricities," though actually what he is discussing is the problem of Shelley's abnormality. The psychoanalysts, of course, have no doubts on this score. Carl Grabo, on the contrary, wonders whether Shelley may not have been supernormal. The fact that a poet, or any artist for that matter, differs strikingly from the average is no reason for stigmatizing him as abnormal. Carl Grabo at least endeavors to state what he regards as the ideal of normality, which is "presumably an ideal balance, a sanity seldom if ever realized. In a world largely peopled by abnormal persons the normal person is then exceptional and his conduct and beliefs may be thought eccentric by his fellows." Grabo's modest footnote to the effect that this is but the assertion of a "mere" literary critic and probably has no scientific validity, is a delightful bit of tongue-in-the-cheek irony. It is this eminently sane and objective statement of the case which contrasts most favorably with the pretentious and often pernicious nonsense that the psychoanalysts have been flooding us of late.

Grabo examines those incidents in Shelley's life which his contemporaries signaled out as unusual or eccentric and which some have insisted were signs of a definite abnormality. The author does not raise his hands in pious horror at Shelley's atheism. The skepticism of youth, he declares epigrammatically, is but another name for puberty. We thus get a

swift-paced interpretation of the leading facts of Shelley's life and a consideration of Shelley's physical characteristics. The material is excellently organized, vividly written, and presented with cogency and force of conviction. The case is stated fairly, and the conclusions calmly and convincingly drawn. Grabo shows that there was at least considerable ground for the fears that Shelley felt. In short, *Shelley's Eccentricities* is a joy to read. It is impartial, coolly judicial, exemplary in its method of assembling and assessing the evidence.

Grabo disposes handsomely of Edward Carpenter's analysis of Shelley, a case of special pleading, just as he effectively sets aside the fantastic psychoanalytic theories spun by Barnefield, who discovered repressed homosexual tendencies in Shelley. Whether Shelley is frank or reticent in his revelations he stands condemned—a method, as Grabo slyly points out, with immense possibilities. It is perfectly easy, by the specious juggling of psychoanalytic criteria, to convict almost any writer of some hidden, unconscious abnormality. It is when he takes up the literary Freudianism of Herbert Read that we perceive the nature of Grabo's defence. By a close study of Shelley's work, both in poetry and prose, he demonstrates that Shelley knew the world as it is and portrayed it with unflinching realism. It is this perception of the obdurate and pervasive evils of society which increased Shelley's pessimism. It is, therefore, utterly unwarranted, without substantiating proof, to maintain that Shelley was homo-sexual or suffered from secret incestuous desires. Why, asks Grabo sagely, is it necessary to prove that Shelley was neurotic or psychotic in order to exalt his role as rebel and reformer? Why make such horribly damaging concessions, especially when there is no proof?

Dispassionately, Grabo brings his inquiry to a close in his concluding chapter, "The Sanity of Genius," which reminds one in part of Shaw's "The Sanity of Art," the brilliant polemic that reduced Max Nordau's *Degeneration* to arid rubbish. The critic will find this chapter particularly rewarding, for it discloses a method of attack that serves admirably as a sovereign remedy against the peculiar aberrations of the psychoanalytic clan. Stoutly Grabo stands up for the right of the general reader to gather the essential facts at issue and to judge the logic of

any method of analysis. Why must we bow down before the Baal of pseudoscience, with its braying jargon? After all, who among us is perfectly sane at all times? If Shelley suffered moments of hallucination or abnormality, then that goes to show he was very much like the rest of us. Grabo speaks with commendable frankness and forthrightness on this point, but his critical insight is most illuminating when he discusses the nature of the artist and his gift of projection or imaginative identification. Shelley never retreated into some ivory tower of the mind. His grasp of reality, despite his occasional hallucinations, never weakened but grew stronger with the years. That is the central thesis Grabo consistently develops. Shelley's work is allowed to speak for itself, and the internal evidence thus made available is incontestable. Grabo thus arrives at the sound conclusion that the charges of homosexuality, hidden or overt, are flat nonsense. In fact, the best sections of this provocative monograph are those which deftly hoist the psychoanalysts with their own petard, exposing their signal limitations, their occupational psychosis. Criticism leveled against Shelley on psychoanalytic grounds springs from the popular delusion that genius is somehow akin to madness. In heartening words, Grabo declares: "The contrary is more likely true, men of genius being the only sane or relatively sane beings in a half-mad world. It is by emulating their superiority, by seeking to share their broader point of view, their more realistic grasp of life, that lesser men may achieve sanity and freedom." Such words of seasoned wisdom should be printed on the cover of every psychoanalytic work that rashly presumes to evaluate works of literature and art in terms of clinical stigmata.

CHARLES I. GLICKSBERG

*Mind, Body and Soul.* Edited by J. Z. Jacobson. Successful Living Publications. 160 pp. \$1.75.

Our time might well be called by future historians "the age of anxiety." Never have men had so much materially and been so fearful spiritually. Preying on society today is a state of worried jitteriness that affects everyone—wives, husbands, parents, children. Wherever one turns, people are troubled, uneasy, fearful.

Contemporary literature reflects our

frantic groping for the light of certainty and wholeness. A welcome addition in the fast-growing field is a collection of thoughtful essays by a group of Chicagoans, some of whom are not as well known as they deserve to be. Brought together under the editorship of J. Z. Jacobson, they have distilled the essence of ten books in one. They cross and re-cross the areas of psychology, religion, medicine, psychiatry and sociology with the greatest of ease. New insights from these newer sciences can be applied in practical, every day life by nearly all of us. With everyone eager to be a success in his work, in his marriage and family life, and in his social relations with others, Mr. Jacobson and associates have produced some helpful hints for peace of mind in this age of anxiety. Several medical chapters will clear up much of the layman's misunderstanding about cancer, heart trouble, polio, TB and the common cold. Interesting thumbnail biographies of great men in science describe the steady triumph of troubled man over his physical and mental disabilities.

While the book suffers from a certain disjointedness due almost necessarily to its being a collection rather than the work of one writer, it nevertheless has a distinct unity of pattern and thought: that it is possible for every one of us to be more happy than we are, more successful than we are, more healthy than we are, more relaxed than we are. Any book that helps us along this road to inner peace is worth reading a second time.

RICHARD C. HERTZ

*Behind the Curtain*, by John Gunther; Harper's. 351 pp. \$3.00.

At a time when the great scientists of the world are soberly commenting on the H-Bomb's power to radio-activate life on this planet out of existence, John Gunther pierces the atmosphere of impending doom with the conclusion that a certain amount of American-Soviet contact will continue to exist peacefully, no matter how irascible. Based on a sober, able study of life backstage "Behind the Curtain," Gunther's statement—that "this is valuable, because only a maniac can want a war, and so long as any sort of contact at all is maintained, 'hot warfare' is unlikely"—would normally still the sense of H-Bomb fear and moral horror. However, more than two years before Mr.

Gunther, another observer of the antics of homo sapiens in this dark and barbarous century was overcome by the thought that not normal men but maniacs were leading mankind in a dance of death. He wrote:

We in America are living among madmen. Madmen govern our affairs in the name of order and security. The chief madmen claim the titles of general, admiral, senator, scientist, administrator, Secretary of State, even President. And the fatal symptoms of their madness is this: they have been carrying through a series of acts which will lead eventually to the destruction of mankind, under the solemn conviction that they are normal responsible people, living sane lives, and working for sane ends . . .

Why do we let the madmen go on with their game without raising our voices? . . . There is a reason: We are madmen too . . .

Lewis Mumford said this months before the Russians exploded their A-Bomb and we made our decision to produce the ultimate weapon of planetary immolation, and to many people who share Gunther's opinion that Soviet stupidities do not mitigate our own, it is the latter quotation which now appears as prophecy fulfilled. But if anyone, not a party liner, shares the illusion that the paranoiac oligarchy in the Kremlin known as the Politburo is not open to the same indictment multiplied, of leadership repeating the undeviating motions of diplomatic frustration and Cominform activity which in a nuclear fission world can only be construed as psychotic, suicidal behavior, let him read this book. It is a good addition to the recent sober literature on Eastern Europe by men who are not Russophobes. Further, as the "God That Failed" story is amplified, the ends-corrupting-means tactics of ruthless Soviet police statism is seen to be a rigid pattern of cultivated Machiavelianism, so stereotyped that only to the mesmerized faithful can it seem the normal diplomacy of normal men. To the defenders of the strategic passes of the "vital center" it appears to be the "double-think" strategy of theory cemented into a dogmatic cult whose devoted followers sing hallelujahs of salvation while rushing after the Pied Piper's red banner to total death.

The problem we face is whether we can use the next few years to avert war. Fortunately, it is apparent that as yet the Russians do not want war because they believe it would destroy their fruits of

victory and probably also them in the present scorecard of their strength vis-à-vis the United States—Life Magazine comparisons to the contrary notwithstanding. This fear, although it does not brake their Vishinsky vituperations in the UN, or their revolving-door in again, out again peripatetics at Lake Success, does keep their activities in the realm of semantics at present. Secondly they are convinced that American capitalist society is rotting itself for the debacle, so that all they need do is wait for the patient's demise. Behind this are: (1) Russian ignorance; (2) the fact that the men in the Kremlin bluff and bluster because they are scared and touchy; (3) it is basic Soviet policy to keep the world in ferment on the score that whatever can be done to provoke or promote irritation is useful. Such a diplomatic-chess policy is responsible for the Bulgarian charges against American envoys, the Vogeler trial, the Angus Ward incident, the Peiping raid on the consulate, the UN walkouts. All are premeditated to prevent Titoism, to break possible links between the West and the Soviet satellites, to preclude US recognition of Mao Tse-Tung's government, to insulate and isolate the Soviet subject peoples from lake Ladoga to the Adriatic. Thus the Russians stall and rearm, delaying the showdown militarily while taking the political offensive.

Unfortunately the Russian ignorance of American psychology, aspirations, beliefs, economy and society remains steadfast as the great danger of war. The Iron Curtain is necessary to the self-preservation of the Politburo dictatorship—to keep the truth from coming out; to keep the truth from getting in. To accomplish the former objective, the Soviet union is deliberately trying to drive foreign newsmen out of Moscow (e.g. Robert Magidoff, Joseph Newman), and to limit their reading of Russian newspapers and periodicals. Russia today prefers that the world get its Soviet news from thought-controlled Radio Moscow and the official propaganda news agency Tass.

Nevertheless the "Iron" Curtain is not an impenetrable barrier but a permeable membrane. During the war years the U.S. Moscow Desk under the chief editorship of this reviewer succeeded in piercing the "Moscow blackout" and reaching the Soviet leaders and Russian people with



information about the United States with excellent results. Unfortunately, the serious error was made, in the cold-war beginnings when it was needed most, of appropriating this operation out of existence to leave a void whose tragic cost to peace, in terms of its dent on the Soviet phobia and misunderstanding vis-a-vis the United States, is incalculable.

Thus today we are faced with the fact made so apparent by Gunther, that the gravest issue is whether we can prosper and be strong behind a containing wall anymore than the Russians can behind the curtain. Certainly we shall not be able to buy our way to peace; we shall not be able to force our way to peace; we shall not be able to declaim our way to peace; we shall have to plod our way to peace using all the arts of diplomacy and positive democratic championship. We can no longer offer to humanity as our dominant ideology anti-communism, a barren ideology born of negation, hatred and fear. We cannot beat Communism at its own game. America must become what our Bill of Rights says we are supposed to be—"the exemplary organization of a mode of life, a focus from which men of all nations can draw orientation and strength." In that way we could finally lift all curtains, and save Peace.

JACOB FREID

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*The Army of Israel*, by Lt. Col. Moshe Pearlman. The Philosophical Library. 256 pp. with illustrations \$5.00.

The history of the Army of Israel is beginning to be written by men who fought for Israel against her enemies, who provided with a precisely itemized list of meager weapons—80 rifles, 20 sub-machine guns, 3 two inch mortars, 200 hand-grenades, 50 Molotov Cocktails—the arsenal of a dream toward which the Jewish People have reached their empty hands for two thousand years.

Lieutenant Colonel Moshe Pearlman writes his book with no flourishes—the bare words themselves are so rich with fierce courage and determination that none is needed. Without complaint he speaks of the defense of the isolated Kibbutz called Negba, where 145 Jewish defenders held off 2000 Egyptian regular troops armed with tanks, Bren carriers, planes, every type of armament. For weeks, shelled from the ground and bombed from the air, Negba was attacked, and the people of the Kibbutz stole out from underground shelters to water their saplings at night and fought on until victory was theirs.

It is the privilege of every Jew to honor the fighting spirit of *Zva Haganah L'Israel*—the Defense Army of Israel—which battled so brilliantly against the regular armies of six Arab States, gaining the respect of the entire world, and winning Israel for the Jewish People. But in this book, Pearlman pays his own tribute to the Jewish Guardsmen—*Hashomer*—whom he calls the father of the Haganah. These are the Jews who founded settlements like Petach Tiqvah in 1878 and learned that Arab attacks would cease when the Jews proved they could fight back. "Jewish settlers who made names for themselves as valiant fighters could travel the length of Palestine without being molested." There were pioneer figures who towered—Joshua Stamper, Michael Katz, the Arabian Jew, Joseph Ben David, who called the rifle a weapon for women, and liked to gallop into battle with lance and spear. It is not generally known that the illegal defense groups which saved many Jews from the 1905 pogroms in Czarist Russia were inspired by the example of the fighting *Hashomer*.

The story of Israeli fighting men and women during the second world war is here in Pearlman's book, and the lessons

which a Haganah learned from the British soldier Orde Wingate, who commanded the hand-picked Jewish volunteers in '37 and '38.

The motto of the Haganah—*Havlagah*—Restraint—was maintained in spite of every provocation. Arab attacks were answered by new settlements, more remote, more isolated, defended by a handful of men and women. Impatient demands of the overzealous for revenge—an eye for an eye—were met with refusal by the Haganah. Settlement and creation were their weapons against the Arabs. With the English, the battle-ground was still creative. Despite the British ban, Haganah secured a continual flow of immigrants—answering terror with shelter and hope for European Jewry. How very characteristic of the People's Army of Israel that it preferred a new Jewish face to a dead British soldier!

There are pictures in this book which are good to show Jewish children in the United States—pictures of fighting men and women, the "desert rats" laughing after battle; a Naval parade in Haifa; wonderfully debonair young Israeli flyers—the Star of David on their tunics with wings; soldiers of the communal settlement Sa'ad, guns ready and prayer-shawls white against their uniforms, celebrating the Feast of The Tabernacles within sight of Egyptian guns.

It is good to know that there exists in the world a people's army dedicated to defense and not aggression, to settlement and creation rather than conquest. It is good for us to know the plans for the defense of Israel which were useful in the past and which may be needed in the future. It is important for us to have a soldier's voice, with a soldier's dry matter-of-factness, telling of these wonders which have been wrought, against dreadful odds, to make a beloved homeland for the Jewish people.

NELLISE CHILD ROSENFELD

*The Record of American Diplomacy*, edited by Ruhl J. Bartlett. Alfred A. Knopf. 731 + XVII pp. \$6.00.

There exist many witty definitions of "Diplomacy," yet none are flattering. Roget's *Thesaurus* places the term next to "Machiavellianism, jobbery, back-stairs influence, gerrymandering." This bad reputation, still difficult to overcome, goes back to the period of absolutism, when diplomats, responsible to their

sovereign only, were not bound by any international code of behavior, and usually not by any moral scruples, either. In the modern democratic state, however, some of the worst features of diplomacy were discountenanced, as its whole character and function underwent a change. In the United States, for instance, the conduct of intergovernmental relations aims—or ought to aim—at the satisfaction of the greatest number of individuals involved. Thus American diplomacy is, or should be, according to the editor of the present volume, "the application of practical policies best designed under existing circumstances to achieve ultimately the greatest possible freedom and happiness of the American people."

To prove his thesis, Dr. Bartlett, professor of Diplomatic History at Tufts College, collected, edited, and furnished with brief comments some three hundred documents pertaining to the history of American foreign relations: the texts of important treaties, pronouncements of statesmen, instructions to diplomats, debates, speeches, and editorials. One would expect such an anthology to make rather tiresome, if not boring reading. But once the reader gets used to certain peculiarities of the diplomatic style, and to the inevitable pathos of political utterances, he is bound to be fascinated by the panorama that unfolds before his eyes. It is the saga of a people which permitted its democratically elected representatives to develop a code of diplomatic behavior which, despite its shortcomings, has been serving as a model to the rest of the world.

The editor does not go so far as to imply that all of America's statesmen were "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Among the men who were in charge of this republic's conduct of intergovernmental relations there have been narrow-minded individuals, disciples of Machiavelli, imperialists, and isolationists. The founders of this state and its earlier presidents were neither imperialists nor isolationists. While Jefferson shared Washington's conviction that the United States should avoid entangling alliances with other nations, he fully realized that there were occasions when such alliances were inevitable. In 1823, in a letter to President Monroe, he declared himself in favor of cooperation with England: "With her on our side we need not fear the whole world." He would not care to obtain

England's friendship "at the price of taking part in her wars," yet he aligned himself with her when there was a threatening danger that the Holy Alliance might assist Spain to recover her American colonies. Neither was President Polk an isolationist; defining the Monroe Doctrine in a most critical moment of American history, he said: "We must ever maintain the principle that the people of this continent alone have the right to decide their own destiny."

Some of the pieces contained in the book show American democracy at its best. There is Abraham Lincoln's famous anti-imperialist statement: "No man is good enough to govern another man without that man's consent. When the white man governs himself, that is self-government, but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism." Lincoln's secretary of state, Seward, in a letter to Lord Lyons, showed himself able to handle masterfully a difficult and precarious situation: the Trent affair. The stopping and search of the British mail steamer *Trent* by the American ship *San Jacinto* and the seizure of two of her passengers who were Confederate officials might have caused a war with Britain, had not

Seward wisely given in: "If I decide this case in favor of my own government," he asserted, "I must disavow its most cherished principles, and reverse and forever abandon its essential policy. The country cannot afford the sacrifice."

Wilson was a prophet and seer when, addressing himself to the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, he pleaded for disarmament and collective security, the only alternative being a concentrated militaristic government in the United States, with a spying system and a limitation of freedom like that of the erstwhile Kaiserreich: "You know what the effect of a military government is upon social questions. You know how impossible it is to effect social reform if everybody must be under orders from the Government. You know how impossible it is, in short, to have a free nation, if it is a military nation and under military order." Wilson had to deal with a fierce opposition that thwarted many of his plans. Among his supporters was Senator Key Pittman who vainly tried to eliminate the so-called Lodge Reservations that virtually killed the Versailles Treaty, and the Covenant of the League of Nations: "We may decide to remain in an existence of selfishness, greed and war," Pittman shouted in despair, "but we will not stand for national cowardice, pretense, and dishonesty."

A more recent manifestation of a far-sighted American foreign policy was Cordell Hull's address of 1936 before the Chamber of Commerce on reciprocal Trade Treaties, a frank and bold attack on this country's "ever-increasing drift toward economic nationalism which has expressed itself in a constant growth of barriers to international trade." In the years to follow, isolationism and political smugness were unequivocally assailed by such an ordinarily restrained organ as the *New York Times*, which editorially demanded, in an era of fast-expanding Fascism, a "tangible expression of the determination of this country to stand by the other democracies should the need arise." When that need actually came, Franklin D. Roosevelt made his famous "Arsenal of Democracy" speech, heralding America's entry in the war: "Freedom means the supremacy of human rights everywhere. Our support goes to those who struggle to gain those rights or to keep them." ALFRED WERNER

## THE RACIAL THINKING OF RICHARD WAGNER

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*The Earth is The Lord's.* By Abraham Joshua Heschel. Henry Schuman. 109 pp. \$2.50.

A great deal has been written on the ghastly annihilation of East European Jewry by Nazi hordes. Many books have been published describing the brutal realities of concentration camps and the heroic stand of the defenders of the Warsaw Ghetto, but Dr. Heschel in his book makes no attempt to describe how Eastern European Jewry was lost, but he makes a profound and most successful attempt to assay *what was lost* to the Jewish people and to the world with the demise of the Eastern European Jewish communities. *The Earth is the Lord's* is undoubtedly the most exquisite tribute to Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian, Roumanian, and Hungarian Jews.

When Heschel asks himself what distinguished the Jews in Eastern Europe from the Sephardic Jews or what marks them different for that matter from American Jewry, the answer is the "inner richness of their being." To make this comparison a more poignant one has

only to contrast this inner richness with what Henry Hurwitz, the Editor, called recently the "galloping vulgarization of American Jewish life." "Their life," says Heschel, "was oriented to the spiritual and they could therefore ignore its external aspects. Outwardly a Jew might have been a pauper, but inwardly he felt like a prince, a kin to the king of kings. Unconquerable freedom was in him who, when wrapped in tallith and tefillin, consecrated his soul to the sanctification of the Holy Name."

No wonder the Jews who had so much inner spiritual content and richness never felt the need to establish anti-defamation agencies and were so little concerned with the crass anti-semitism of their neighbors.

It is quite pertinent to the current discussion of the future of American Jewry to consider that Dr. Heschel emphasizes that the learning of Torah was the primary *raison d'être* of East European Jews. He also emphasizes the often forgotten fact that this learning was non-utilitarian. A Jew studied the Talmud sixteen hours a day, not because he

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wanted a degree or as means for economical or social advancement, but he studied Torah. L'Shma for its own sake and for the self-edification of his soul. The author gives a splendid and original comparative study of the Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jewrys.

Unlike many Jewish historians Dr. Heschel does not make a secret of his admiration for the Hasidim. In his view the Hassidic movement saved Jewish life in Eastern Europe. He says, "Jewishness was as though reborn. Bible verses, observances, customs, suddenly took on a flavor like that of new grain." To prove his point the author has made a most fortunate choice of some of the most meaningful and fascinating Hasidic stories.

Dr. Heschel makes it plain that he wrote his book with a purpose because he finishes it with a plea to American Jewry which is still holding the key to the locked spiritual sanctuary of Eastern European Jewry to make an attempt to unlock it because "unless we remember," says Dr. Heschel, "unless we unlock it, the holiness of ages will remain a secret of God."

The woodcuts by Ilya Schor further enhance the value of this worthwhile book. They are truly interpretative of the spirit and the meaning of the author's thesis.

MARK M. KRUG

*Emperor Frederick II*, by David G. Einstein. Philosophical Library. 427 pp. \$4.50.

Frederick II, King of Sicily and Holy Roman Emperor, was one of the most considerable and colorful figures of the Middle Ages. Of Norman stock, his early years were passed as an orphan ward of Pope Innocent III who was responsible in 1211 for the election of the young king of Sicily to the throne of Germany. The popular enthusiasm for this election was typical of the welcome evoked by Frederick's personal appearance throughout his life. Before long he was complete master of Germany and had been crowned King of Germany and Holy Roman Emperor.

The first years of his rule were triumphant. As long as he could he evaded a youthful pledge to undertake a Crusade and instead consolidated his dominions. This procrastination eventually led to an edict of excommunication against him issued by Pope Gregory IX. Frederick's

reply was to embark on a Crusade, without the blessing and support of the church. In 1229 he negotiated the Treaty of Jaffa with the Moslems and shortly afterwards was crowned King of Jerusalem. The following year Frederick made his peace with the Pope but this proved to be merely a truce in this mighty struggle between State and Church.

The remainder of Frederick's life centered round this conflict with the Vatican, and—despite a series of military successes—he found himself unable to cope with the intangible enmity promulgated in acts of excommunication and carried by the priests and friars of Europe. The last years of his life were passed in increasing defeat and disillusionment, and the Hohenstaufen rule endured only a few years after his death.

David Einstein has written an excellent biography of Frederick which is thoroughly absorbing, except for a distracting habit of stopping the narrative to speculate or to foreshadow future events or to make questionable general statements such as "Death in a great man's career marks a change in history. The death of a great man usually completes the history of another;" or "The Treaty of Jaffa (1229) is one of the early major documents of history." One would have welcomed a fuller picture of Frederick's literary achievements and the refreshing liberalism of his court with details of some of the Christian, Jewish, and Moslem scholars who were his intimates. Nevertheless, this is a fascinating book, the narrative is good and the spirit of the Middle Ages is admirably recaptured.

GEOFFREY B. WIGODER

*The Wall*, by John Hersey. Alfred A. Knopf. 632 pp. \$4.00.

There are already known to the civilized world many volumes dealing with German bestialities. Extant are chronicles and records of the methodical extermination of Jews, and there are books from those who somehow missed the ovens to tell of the favorite industry of the greatest mass murders of our generation.

Now comes John Hersey to narrate the fate of the Jewry in Warsaw at the hands of Germans, from the year 1939 to 1943, who, shortly after their smashing conquest of Poland herded a half million Jews into a space of one hundred city blocks and built a wall around that area.

Indescribable housing conditions, unspeakable food and epidemics helped reduce the population to proportions desired by the invaders. Chiefly, however, it was the daily removal of thousands to nearby Treblinka, the asphyxiation plant, that emptied the Ghetto at regular intervals.

The Jews were given, within their trap, a sort of "self government" and the initial thousands taken outside of the wall—men, women and children—were told by the Nazis that they were leaving for "resettlement," amidst better living conditions, somewhere in Eastern Europe. These left their homes joyfully; and, it was only when a chance discovery of the murder plant, nearby, made clear to them that the "resettlement" hoax was but a ghastly fraud to lure them away to the incinerators, that the horrors of their inescapable plight became hopelessly apparent. Thirty six months later reduced to a mere forty thousand from an early half million, the entrapped inhabitants behind the wall decided to retaliate. While their spirit was high human anger, however, was not enough. The so called "Polish Underground," behind the wall was, according to the author, niggardly even with the small fire-arms. Jews, emaciated, desperate, pitted against robots mounted on panzers and facing professional killers equipped with matchless twentieth century weapons, were soon destroyed. Within a few weeks of the start of the armed conflict behind the wall, in the city of Warsaw there were but more cemeteries. The German casualties were light.

This, in the main, is the story of *The Wall*. The method of telling it is through the writings of one Noach Levinson, a Jewish scholar, by occupation a clerk, who voluntarily appointed himself a chronicler of the tragic events and who, with the approval and the co-operation of his tormented co-religionists, secreted his archives in Jewish cemeteries and elsewhere so that, later, after the devastation of the ghetto and his own death the ghastly record of the Jewish martyrdom would become the property of mankind.

Mr. Levinson chose but a dozen people, three or four families, through whose lips and his own observation and participation in the tragedy of Warsaw he limned the holocaust of Jewry in the claws of the Hun. Among his chief characters are sensitive intellectuals, orthodox Jews, people who knew how to die and men

and women who did the heroic with the casualness of discharging the humdrum and the routine. Death always at elbow range, men and women behind the wall, loved and found time for love making. Children were born. Men dreamed of a better tomorrow and, with Germans daily snatching thousands from their midst, doctrinaires and dogmatists were passionately advancing and defending abstract theories of party creeds. Unity of purpose was achieved only when the inevitable final disaster was at the very doors of the condemned.

Noach Levinson, the chronicler has chosen well from the people he knew behind the wall to tell the story of their impending doom and the destruction of Warsaw Jewry. A bitter story, wholly unrelived in tone, color, or refrain except in its occasional emphasis on qualities of human nobility and the not infrequent impact upon the reader of blinding glimpses of berserk brutishness and depravity.

And yet! Even at this hour some weeks after reading *The Wall* I am not yet sure whether in juxtaposition with other stories of the agony of Jews and their unspeakable fate, *The Wall* satisfies me as wholly adequate. A creative effort it is and a formidable one; a terrifying tale of the agony of a people. But for me in Hersey's telling the immensity of their martyrdom does not emerge. The ten or twenty people who are Mr. Levinson's—Hersey's—concern are finely depicted and I doubt little that he honestly tried to make them truly representative of the thousands huddled in the hell behind *The Wall*. But these thousands, within his reference, do not come "to life"—for me. The German raiding parties plucked them; typhus decimated them; they died of starvation or at the hands of killers by day and night. Technically an impeccable job I sensed no kinship between the masses and the artist excepting where he literally so to speak, pointed at them, to call one's attention to their existence or perhaps, upon a reading of the chronicler's, Levinson's estimates of the German weekly aggregate removed to the slaughterhouse. To repeat, aside from his well chosen chief characters, the "people" on Mr. Hersey's large canvass seem somehow static and inarticulate. A fine novel *The Wall* and one that all Christians should read but the story of the Warsaw Ghetto must be told again—and again. BENJAMIN WEINTROUB

# THE CHICAGO JEWISH FORUM

## INDEX TO VOLUME VIII (1949-1950)

All contributions below are articles except those followed by

F—Fiction

P—Poetry

A—Art

R—Review

- ANGOFF, CHARLES: First Days In America ..... 184
- ANNES, PAUL G.: *Investment in People*, by Embree and Waxman. R. .... 83
- BECKER, HARRY: *The Embers Still Burn*, by Ira A. Hirschmann. R. .... 149
- BERMAN, MORTON M.: *Challenging Years*, by Stephen Wise. R. .... 148
- BLUMENFIELD, SAMUEL M.: John Dewey and Jewish Education ..... 169
- CAHNMAN, WERNER J.: Theories of Anti-Semitism ..... 50
- Half A Century In Community Service*, by Charles S. Bernheimer. R. .... 219
- A Short History of the Jewish People*, by Cecil Roth. R. .... 279
- CHAFFEE, ELEANOR ALLETTA: Portrait of an Old Woman. P. .... 93
- DESPRES, LEON M.: *Held Without Bail*, by Eugene S. Zemans. R. .... 220
- The Case of General Yamashita*, by A. Frank Reel. R. .... 221
- DIJOUR, ILJA W.: *To Dwell In Safety*, by Mark Wishnitzer. R. .... 214
- FRANK, MURRAY: Washington Notes ..... 63
- The World of Emma Lazarus*, by H. E. Jacob. R. .... 87
- Washington Notes ..... 125
- Discrimination and the Jewish Student ..... 160
- Washington Notes ..... 268
- FREEDMAN, MORRIS: The State of the Yiddish Theater ..... 234
- FREID, JACOB: *Behind the Curtain*, by John Gunther. R. .... 283
- FRIEDLANDER, ISAAC: First Steps. A. .... 176
- FRIEDMAN, RALPH: Report On The Jews ..... 166
- The Five Dollar Bill. F. .... 252
- FRIITTA: Cartoons and Drawings. A. .... 9-10-11
- Prisoners. A. .... 15
- GERTZ, ELMER: Midwestern Commentary ..... 59
- Reinhold Niebuhr: *Prophet from America*, by D. R. Davies. R. .... 74
- Midwestern Commentary ..... 121
- How Secure These Rights?* by Ruth G. Weintraub. R. .... 141
- Charles Dana and the Jews ..... 196
- Our Sovereign State*, edited by R. S. Allen. R. .... 278
- GETA, JOSEPH: Problems of Modern Emigration ..... 177
- GLICKSBERG, CHARLES I.: *The Penal Colony*, by Franz Kafka. R. .... 85
- Image and Idea*, by Philip Rahv. R. .... 217
- Jewish Poets in America ..... 259
- Shelley's Eccentricities*, by Carl Grabo. R. .... 282
- GRABO, CARL H.: Los Alamos. P. .... 38
- Arabs, Oil and History*, by Kermit Roosevelt. R. .... 76
- Philosophical Writings of Philo*, edited by Hans Levy. R. .... 76
- Essence of Hinduism*, by Swami Nikhilananda. R. .... 76
- The Art of Staying Sane*, by Joseph Barth. R. .... 76
- Schoolmen of Criticism ..... 99
- A Treasury of Russian Verse*, edited by Abraham Yarmolinsky. R. .... 144
- The Poetry and Prose of Heinrich Heine*, edited by F. Ewen. R. .... 144
- I Did Not Interview the Dead*, by David P. Boder. R. .... 208
- A Dreamer's Journey*, by Morris R. Cohen. R. .... 210
- HALPERN, BEN: Competitive Socialism in Israel ..... 33
- HERTZ, RICHARD C.: *Mind, Body and Soul*, edited by J. Z. Jacobson. R. .... 283
- HINDUS, MILTON: Repeat Performance ..... 153
- HOTZ, ALFRED J.: *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*, edited by Lester Markel. R. .... 209
- KALMER, JOSEPH: Fritta ..... 9
- KAYSER, LOUISE: Besamim Box. A. .... 67
- KRUG, MARK M.: The Cold War Reaches Israel ..... 89
- In the Service of the Torah ..... 228
- The Earth is the Lord's*, by Abraham Joshua Heschel. R. .... 288
- LERNER, LEO A.: *The Man with the Golden Arm*, by Nelson Algren. R. .... 143
- LEVIN, BEATRICE: Portrait of the Jew in American Drama ..... 107
- LICHTENSTEIN, ISSAC: Scribe. A. .... 54

- MADISON, CHARLES A.: *Dubinsky and the International* \_\_\_\_\_ 16  
 — *The Bending Cross*, by Ray Ginger. R. — 151  
 — *John L. Lewis*, by Saul Alinsky. R. — 211
- MAYER, ROBERT: *Last Words of Colonel Walter Giesecke*. F. \_\_\_\_\_ 44
- McWILLIAMS, CAREY: *West Coast Letter* — 68  
 — *West Coast Letter* — 131  
 — *West Coast Letter* — 204  
 — *West Coast Letter* — 273
- MONTAGU, M. F. ASHLEY: *The Negro in the United States* — 29  
 — *Social Structure*, by G. P. Murdock. R. 86
- PAPO, JOSEPH M.: *The Sephardim—Jewry's Stepchildren* — 1  
 — *In Search of a Future*, by Maurice Hindus. R. — 142
- REIN, DAVID: *The Loyalty Program* — 94
- RIBALOW, HAROLD U.: *Limitations of Artistic Freedom* — 12  
 — *Tales of My People*, by Sholem Asch. Translated by Meyer Levin. R. — 73
- RIEFF, PHILIP: *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, by Paul Blanshard. R. — 140  
 — *Essays on Freedom and Power*, by Lord Acton. R. — 140  
 — *The Vatican in World Politics*, by Avro Manhattan. R. — 140  
 — *Union Guy*, by Clayton A. Fountain. R. 220
- RODMAN, FRANCES: *Ancestor*. P. — 159
- ROHRlich, GEORGE F.: *Judaeo-Christian Legends in Japan* — 239
- ROSENFELD, NELLISE, CHILD: *The Army of Israel*, by Lt. Col. Moshe Pearlman. R. — 285
- ROSENTHAL, DR. JUDAH: *Rabbi Meir of Rothenberg*, by A. Agus. R. — 80
- ROUCEK, JOSEPH S.: *Governments of Danubian Europe*, by Andrew Gyorgy. R. — 280
- SATT, BEREL: *Chanukah Blessing*. A. — 117
- SCHAALMAN, HERMAN E.: *The Book of Human Destiny*, by Solomon Goldman. R. — 208
- SCHOR, ILYA: *Admonition*. A. — 247
- SCHWARTZ, ALLEN D.: *Solomon Maimon*, by Moses Hadas. R. — 146  
 — *Travels of Benjamin III*. Translated by Moshe Spiegel. R. — 146
- SEGEL, DAVID: *Two Brothers*. A. — 136  
 — *Barbed Wire*. A. — 251
- SHAPIRO, ISAAC: *Tevye's Daughters*, by Sholom Aleichem. R. — 80
- SKLARE, MARSHALL: *Jewish Artists of the 19th and 20th Centuries*, by Karl Schwarz. R. — 281
- SOKOL, BERNARD H.: *The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson*, by D. J. Boorstin. R. — 83  
 — *U. S. A. Measure of a Nation*, by Thomas R. Carskadon and Rudolf Modley. R. — 218
- STEIN, LEON: *The Music of Israel*, by Peter Gradenwitz. R. — 137
- TANAKA, TOGO W.: *Japanese-American Housing* — 24  
 — *Americans Betrayed*, by Morton Grodzins. R. — 213
- TCHERNICHOWSKI, SAUL: *Before A Statue of Apollo*. Translated by Sholom J. Kahn. P. 182
- TOWNSEND, WILLARD S.: *Racial Discrimination in Employment* — 40
- VERO: *New York Notes* — 55  
 — *New York Notes* — 118
- WALTER, NINA WILLIS: *Senility*. P. — 23  
 — *Tossing Ships*. P. — 23
- WEINTROUB, BENJAMIN: *Benya Krik, the Gangster*, by Isaak Babel. R. — 87  
 — *A Little Sleep, A Little Slumber*, by Norman Katkov. R. — 88  
 — *Letters to My Son*, by Dagobert Runes. R. — 150  
 — *Here To Stay*, by S. B. Komaiko. R. — 152  
 — *My Son, the Lawyer*, by Henry Denker. R. — 222  
 — *The Wall*, by John Hersey. R. — 289
- WERNER, ALFRED: *The Peace*, by Ernst Juenger. R. — 78  
 — *Israel: A History of the Jewish People*, by Rufus Lears. R. — 81  
 — *From Day to Day*, by Odd Nansen. R. — 138  
 — *The German Novel*, by H. Boeschstein. R. — 212  
 — *Germans Against Hitler* — 223  
 — *The Record of American Diplomacy*, edited by Ruhl J. Bartlett. R. — 286
- WERNER, NAT: *Lot's Wife*. A. — 28  
 — *Song of Songs*. A. — 49
- WIGODER, GEOFFREY: *Report from Tel Aviv* — 113  
 — *Report from Jerusalem* — 193  
 — *The Zionist Idea*, by Joseph Heller. R. — 216  
 — *Report from Jerusalem* — 265  
 — *Emperor Frederick II*, by David G. Einstein. R. — 289
- WISH, HARVEY: *This Was America*, by Oscar Handlin. R. — 72  
 — *The Protestant Era*, by Paul Tillich. R. — 150  
 — *These Our People: Minorities in American Culture*, by R. A. Schermerhorn. R. — 277
- WORKMAN, SAMUEL K.: *Selwyn S. Schwartz: Style is Conflict* — 248

Bd. Rev. Men.



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*In This Issue:*

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**The Sephardim—Jewry's Stepchildren**

By Joseph M. Papo

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# A Message from Israel

**"THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL** is deeply concerned that the work of the Jewish National Fund shall expand to the widest possible extent. The lofty task of the JNF to root the Jewish masses in the soil of the Homeland has now entered a great new period of fulfillment. Land belonging to individual title holders, even when conquered by force of arms, must be fully and legally redeemed, and we look to the JNF to redeem it, reclaim it and assist in the intensive settlement upon it of those great numbers of our people. Israel needs the cooperation of the JNF, and through it of the Jewish people throughout the world, on a scale far vaster than anything known before.

"I am glad that you will be able to inform your colleagues and workers in America of the great new plan of the purchase this year by the JNF of one million dunams of land through the Government of Israel under the agreement arrived at between the Government of Israel and the JNF. Now that this plan has been adopted and set in motion, the Fund will have to call upon the services and the support of its great army of friends, above all in the United States, more than at any time in its history, and I am sure that they will rise to the historic need and the historic opportunity.

"The State of Israel, while still troubled in its infant republican growth, is a living and growing reality. We still face great dangers until all is secure, but we are determined to move forward unflinchingly for the complete fulfillment of our historic mission. I am confident that our people throughout the world, led by the army of Jewish National Fund workers in the U. S., will stand by us faithfully and enable the Government of Israel and the Jewish National Fund to achieve the main purpose of our common endeavor: to bring back in the fastest possible time the largest possible number of Jews to the free soil of Israel."

A Statement by DAVID BEN-GURION  
on the Jewish National Fund



Courtesy The New York Times

